



PUNK'S RENT REVOLT

**Zo housing guru is
Grammy-winner's
kin, lives free
in B'klyn**



A radical activist driving Mayor Mamdani's socialist housing agenda is the daughter of a famed music studio owner who recorded legends like David Bowie, the Ramones and Foo Fighters. Yet Tracy Rosenthal, 39, has been on a four-year "rent

strike" after spotting a cockroach in her \$2,300-a-month Bed-Stuy pad. The influential "Abolish Rent" author encourages her DSA comrades to follow her lead, and calls rent "a ransom."

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Donna Renna
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Barbara Levey
Lic. Assoc. R. E. Broker
M 917.476.6241 | O 212.909.7963
barbara.levey@elliman.com



Nicholas Polihros
Lic. Assoc. R. E. Broker
M 917.952.2940 | O 212.891.7632
npolihros@elliman.com

elliman.com

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'Spa' BFFs in the pink

"Spa Weekend" co-stars Isla Fisher (near right) and Leslie Mann bring the hot-pink frivolity Friday night at the gala Las Vegas premiere about a group of well-to-do BFFs on a — what else? — spa weekend in Palm Springs when things go bonkers. The flick opens in theaters this month.

Eclipse this week

Wednesday, the skies will be shrouded in a moon shadow due to a solar eclipse that will be visible in Europe, Canada and parts of the Northern US.

This celestial spectacle occurs when our lunar satellite passes between the sun and the Earth, causing a twilight-esque effect as it obscures the solar rays, according to the Weather Channel.

When this cosmic overlap is total, all that will be visible is the sun's corona — its elusive outer atmosphere, according to Space.com.

In this case, the 180-mile-wide path of totality will sweep across Spain, Greenland, Iceland, northern Spain and the Balearic Islands, marking Europe's first total solar eclipse since 1999, Livescience reported. *Ben Cost*

Flight grounded by tot's tantrum

They treated it like a plane-ground.

A cross-Canada flight had to be canceled after a misbehaving tot refused to fasten their seat belt, stranding the passengers until the following day.

The ludicrous incident occurred on Thursday, Aug. 6, after Porter Airlines flight PD444 had departed the terminal at Victoria International Airport (YYJ) in British Columbia and was prepping to take off for Toronto, CTV News reported. *Ben Cost*

JERSEY 'JAWS' PANIC

Chum risk

By JEANNE ERICKSON

A real-life "Jaws" nightmare is stalking the Jersey Shore — with fishermen chumming for massive, man-eating sharks near beaches where unsuspecting families and children are swimming.

Bay Head Mayor Bill Curtis told The Post anglers have been using kayaks and drones to drop bloody bait fish to attract sharks. And sometimes the uneaten bait drifts closer to shore.

"It's 'Jaws' all over again," Curtis fumed. "It's crazy — a disaster headed straight for us! I've personally seen them chumming for sharks, even during the day. God forbid a child gets bitten or killed."

The warning comes after Jersey Shore surf fishermen legally landed at least four bull sharks and a tiger shark. Both species are cold-blooded killing machines responsible for most of unprovoked attacks on people.

Mayor's hands tied

Curtis said the town has little power to stop the practice. The chumming is irresponsible but not illegal.

"My hands are tied. The laws can't help us. The lifeguards keep watch, and we made a town resolution encouraging anglers to comply with state and federal regulations, but that's all we can do."

There have been plenty of shark sightings, but no attacks yet this summer.

"Sharks only have one job and that is to get food," said Kenny Rosenblatt, owner of shark fishing charter company East Coast Shredderz, who works alongside Jake, Kurtis, and Mac. "Most, like us, catch and release responsibly, but there are fishermen who don't do things right."

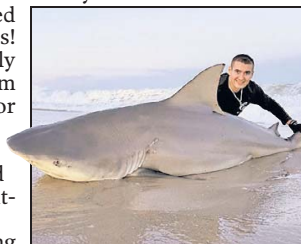
The controversy comes as sharks are already finding plenty of reasons to cruise close to the Jersey coast — and nearby New York shores too.

Huge schools of squid and sand eels have created an underwater buffet for predators, while warming ocean temperatures are allowing some shark species to arrive earlier and remain longer.

"I'm hearing about bull sharks every week, almost every day," New Jersey Fish and Wildlife biologist Greg Hinks told the Asbury Park Press. "It's unprecedented."

The controversy echoes the darkest summer in Jersey Shore history. In 1916, a rogue shark terrorized the Garden State for 12 days, attacking five people and killing four. The predator — long believed to be a great white, though historians now debate whether it was a bull shark — was finally caught and gutted, with human remains found inside.

The attacks inspired Peter Benchley's novel "Jaws," which became Steven Spielberg's 1975 blockbuster.



COPS: ZO STIRS UP

By RICH CALDER

Mayor Mamdani plans to defy 9/11 victims' families by attending the 25th-anniversary ceremony of the terror attacks at Ground Zero, but he ditched this year's ceremony for the victims of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

Instead of attending the solemn ceremony on Feb. 26 at Ground Zero, he chose to pitch a housing project to President Trump in Washington, DC.

Mamdani — who was photographed last year grinning with a Brooklyn imam who was an unindicted co-conspirator in the 1993 bombing that killed six people and injured more than 1,000 — sent one of his deputies to the memorial instead.

That day, the socialist mayor met privately with the president to try to convince him to provide more than \$21 billion in federal funds for a 12,000-unit affordable housing project at a massive railyard in Queens.

Not enough cameras

Mamdani “blew us off and passed on it because he does not give a s—t,” raged Andrew Colabella, whose 41-year-old cousin John DiGiovanni was one of the six people murdered when radical Islamic terrorists detonated a bomb in an parking garage.

“The only thing he cares about is his ego and his so-called political future,” added Colabella, a Republican legislator representing Westport, Conn.

Colabella and some other family members of the 1993 victims accused Mamdani of blowing off the 33rd annual memorial service because it lacked major

Michael Appleton / Mayoral Photography Office

Hizz will go to 9/11, but snubs bombing

MISSING MAYOR: A ceremony on Feb. 26 honors the victims of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing at the National September 11 Memorial Plaza — an event that Mayor Mamdani chose not to attend.

media coverage. The mayor was quick to visit Ground Zero in April to greet King Charles III because plenty of cameras were rolling, they added.

Colabella accused the mayor of meeting with Trump on a pie-in-the-sky housing proposal to avoid being booed at Ground Zero over his “longtime association” with individuals who’ve defended Islamic terror.

Colabella said he’s among the more than 79,000 who’ve signed a surging petition demanding Mamdani skip the victims’ tribute at Ground Zero on Sept. 11.

Edward Smith — whose 35-

year-old wife Monica Rodriguez Smith was seven months pregnant when she was killed in the 1993 WTC bombing — said Mamdani did him and other family members a huge favor by skipping the February service.

Deputy sent instead

“It is best he didn’t show up, but it’s even crazier that New York would elect him mayor in the first place,” added Smith, a native New Yorker now living in Scottsdale, Ariz.

Smith, who plans to attend the 9/11 ceremony, said he’s not

signing the petition to keep Mamdani away because it “empowers” the mayor, adding he’d prefer people opposing his presence to “boo him or turn their backs on him.”

Julia Kerson, deputy of mayor of operations, went to the ceremony at the September 11 Memorial plaza in Mamdani’s place.

Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch, FDNY First Deputy Commissioner Dan Flynn and City Council Speaker Julie Menin were also in attendance, according to Eyewitness News ABC-7 video of the event.

By TINA MOORE
Police Bureau Chief

New York City is bracing for a security nightmare next month when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visits Gotham — and cops are blaming Mayor Mamdani.

The PM’s visit will now necessitate a massive, presidential-level police shield, and furious NYPD sources told The Post Mamdani’s reckless, anti-Bibi obsession emboldens radical agitators, leaving frontline cops and everyday New Yorkers squarely in the crosshairs.

“Basically, he’s making what would be considered a Category 1 hurricane that we deal with every year into a Category 5 because of his words,” a law enforcement source said.

Hizzoner is staunchly pro-Palestine and anti-Israel and called for Netanyahu’s arrest during his 2025 mayoral campaign.

He reiterated those threats last month before acknowledging the NYPD doesn’t have the authority to do so.

‘Unfair’ to police

Mamdani then urged his radical base to “take to the streets” during Netanyahu’s visit, saying “one of the bedrocks of our city is protest.”

That has enraged many police officers who already have their work cut out for them, the law enforcement source said.

“We have to protect hotels, we have to protect wherever [dignitaries] go out to eat, we have to protect everything,” the law enforcement source said. “Having the mayor say, ‘Go ahead and protest, and he should be arrested’ ... is unfair to your own cops.”

Netanyahu is expected to arrive in the city next month for the United Nations General Assembly and is scheduled to address the body on Sept. 26.

Netanyahu’s full schedule isn’t yet known, meaning the final number of police officers needed for his detail is up in the air, but it could grow to 60 or more with “direct and peripheral” officers, police sources said.

Most dignitaries get a protective detail of one sergeant and eight detectives. Security at the event also includes federal and state agents.

“What’s going to stop one of the

Mam critic flatlines, flips off death

Conservative activist Scott LoBaido was dead for two minutes after a confrontation with Mayor Mamdani at a pro-cop event Tuesday ended in a heart attack — but he promised The Post not even a coronary could stop his crusade to keep the socialist away from the 25th anniversary of 9/11 at Ground Zero.

Even while recovering from

his near-fatal heart attack — in which witnesses and friends said his heart stopped for two minutes — LoBaido orchestrated a plane to fly around Manhattan on Friday with a banner warning the mayor: “Mamdandi [sic], stay away from Ground Zero.”

“I’m trying to rest up, keep my blood pressure down, but the work must continue. As long as

my heart is ticking, I’m not done,” LoBaido (right) said through his manager Dan Caropreso.

LoBaido, 61, collapsed at the NYPD’s 43rd Patrol Borough National Night Out Against Crime on Tuesday. He suffered a ventricular fibrillation and had to be brought back — once by CPR and twice by defibrillators — after flatlining twice. *Shane Galvin*





BIG BIBI TROUBLE



Anti-Netanyahu
push a 'danger'
for NYPD, public



Benjamin Netanyahu is a war criminal,

PIPE DOWN:
Mayor Mamdani's crusade against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (right), who'll be in town next month for the UN General Assembly, is forcing the NYPD to prep for much tighter security.



Anadolu via Getty Images

protesters from becoming a vigilante and trying to hurt or God forbid kill him?" the source said.

Cops are also worried protesters who think they're acting on the mayor's behalf "could cause an officer to get hurt or even killed," the source said.

Another law enforcement source wondered if Mamdani already forgot the bomb discovered outside Gracie Mansion in March.

Two lefty Pennsylvania men inspired by ISIS allegedly attempted to detonate two bombs in a crowd of people attending the "Stop the Islamic Takeover of New York City" protest held by a far-right activist.

The law enforcement source fears a similar terror attack attempt during Netanyahu's visit.

"His rhetoric is reckless," the source said of Mamdani. "It em-

boldens radical and unstable agitators who could put both New Yorkers and law enforcement officers in harm's way."

'Powder keg'

A City Hall insider also fears violence. "It's very concerning," said the insider. "I mean, [Mamdani's] rhetoric has clearly caused this uptick in antisemitism all across our city, and now telling people to go out and protest is going to create a powder keg of a situation."

"It's not the mayor's job to tell people to protest and to urge them to protest," the city government source said. "It's likely to be very violent. And I mean, what on Earth is this accomplishing?"

"It's completely irresponsible," he added.

More than half of NYC hate

crimes — 56.9% — were antisemitic, despite Jewish people making up just 10% of the city's population, the NYPD said.

Detectives Endowment Association president Scott Munro fears for his members.

"Mayor Mamdani's reckless rhetoric surrounding Netanyahu and his calls for protests only fan the flames — making the assignment of protecting UNGA dignitaries even more difficult," he said in a statement.

He noted that officers are still recovering from injuries suffered in Midtown during the NBA Finals.

"Our detectives will do their job, as they always do," Munro said. "It's time for the mayor to do his — stand with the city and the men and women in blue protecting it, not with those on the radical protest line."

Zoh 'fueled' hate

A Florida man charged with a hate crime for hurling a brick through a synagogue window was motivated by a video of Mayor Mamdani calling Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu a "war criminal," his police interview suggests.

Sarasota resident Brayton Laschinger, 30, admitted he targeted the Chabad House on July 29 because it is a "Jewish temple" and told detectives he became enraged by "propaganda on social media that was making him mad," the Sarasota Police Department said.

"Laschinger admitted to deliberately throwing the brick at the window of the synagogue because it was a Jewish temple," Sarasota Detective Frank Castro wrote in the affidavit dated July 30.

"He stated he was anti-Israel," Castro added.

The only political content found on his public Instagram account was Mamdani's July 21 video labeling Netanyahu with the "war criminal" moniker.

He posted \$2,500 bond and is out pending his arraignment on Aug. 28.

Gabrielle Fahmy

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POST contact numbers

Editorial
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News Tips (212) 930-8500
Sports Desk (212) 930-8700

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31, 38; Xtra: x2
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■ Play-3 Sat.: 665; Wild: 5
■ Play-4 Sat.: 2462; Wild: 3
■ Cash-5 Sat.: 19, 20, 23, 30, 33

95% give NYC schools a failing grade

New Yorkers can't agree on anything — except for their disgust with the high-spending, dismally performing city school system.

A staggering 95% of Gothamites say public schools need to shape up their math and reading scores and/or spend less money, according to a damning new poll by good government nonprofit think tank the Empire Center.

Only 3% of residents approved of the job New York Public Schools is doing and said it should continue as is, the survey found.

"I have never seen such a broad condemnation of business as usual," Empire Center president Zilvinas Silenas told The Post.

A whopping 91% of respondents said the DOE needs to improve reading and math scores as the city struggles with an illiteracy and numeracy crisis.

Less than half of all New York elementary students, 48%, are proficient in reading, which dropped from 53% the year before, state Education Department stats on the 2025-26 English Language Arts test revealed this week. About 56% made the grade on the reading test, a 7% jump from the year before.

Another 35% of the poll's respondents said the school system needs to rein in spending. *David Spector*

Mayor's anti-cop picks for ed. panel

By DAVID SPECTOR

Mayor Mamdani has inserted radical anti-police and anti-Israel members to the Panel for Education Policy, including one who is pushing public schools to have racism reflection rooms, The Post has learned.

Among Mamdani's 13 picks for the agency is race-obsessed former Department of Education official Lucas Koehler, head of the \$500 million endowment for the Foundation for City College.

Koehler — who is white — pushed his agency to "dismantle white dominant culture" and supported segregated spaces in city classrooms for educators to reflect on their purported racism.

The "separate spaces for white people and non-black people of color" would be used "to interrogate their own internalized anti-black racism and unlearn white dominant behaviors without causing harm to black colleagues," reads a statement that Koehler endorsed during his DOE tenure from the Division of Early Child-

In-school police pose [a threat] to black and brown children and their families.

— Proposal signed by Lucas Koehler (right)



hood Education Antiracism Coalition, extremism watchdog Canary Mission found.

Koehler, who worked for the DOE from 2014-2022, also called on the agency to sever all ties with the NYPD and said cops pose a "threat" to minority students, as part of the letter he signed on to.

"In addition to the threat in-school police pose to black and brown children and their families,

the funding allocated to the NYPD necessarily keeps money away from the social services that keep children safe and secure, and therefore better able to learn and grow," the statement read.

Another radical anti-cop pick for the board is Raysa Rodriguez, who heads the Citizens Committee for Children, which has repeatedly pushed to defund the police.

The CCC called for the NYPD to

stop issuing quality-of-life violations and for the City Council to reject funding a \$225 million NYPD training facility in Queens.

Another pick Mamdani placed on the board is Brooklyn College and CUNY Graduate Center alum Dr. Madeline "Maddy" Fox, who signed a letter accusing Israel of genocide and denying the existence of widespread antisemitism on college campuses.

"There is no rampant crisis of antisemitism on our campuses, despite prolonged attempts by the current administration to persuade the public that there is one," read the 2025 letter, signed by Jewish faculty at CUNY, Berkley and Georgetown.

The letter went on to accuse the Trump administration of "Islamophobia" for its attempts to combat antisemitism.

The PEP's 24-member board approves contracts for the Department of Education — which boasts a \$45 billion budget, sets policies and manages school closures.

Of the board's 23 voting members, 13 are picked by the mayor.

'Unethical' promo for '1619' scribe's bar

The husband of Nikole Hannah-Jones, the woke New York Times scribe behind the wildly controversial "1619 Project," shamelessly plugged his new bookstore and bar during a public education meeting — and is facing calls to step down and possible ethics probes.

Panel for Educational

Policy Contracts Committee Chair Faraji Hannah-Jones used his official speaking time at the July 29 meeting at the High School for Fashion Industries in Chelsea to advertise that he and his wife Nikole (inset) are planning to open a bookstore in Bedford Stuyvesant that will sell "banned" books.

"My wife and I are building an institution in Brooklyn, in Bed Stuy, called North Star Books and Bar," Hannah-Jones said.

North Star Books and Bar is set to open sometime in 2026.

City Councilman Phil Wong (D-Queens) denounced the self-promo-

tion and said Hannah-Jones violated Chapter 68 of the City Charter, which prohibits public servants from using their positions for personal profit.

"Government meetings are for conducting the public's business, not promoting your own business," Wong told The Post.

David Spector





ANTHONY IZZO
Found in Stony Brook pool.

Retired NYPD chief drowns

A retired NYPD chief was found dead in the backyard pool of his Long Island home, according to police.

Anthony Izzo's body was found by a relative inside the pool on Friday around 7:45 p.m., the Suffolk County Police Department said in a statement.

First responders rushed to the Stony Brook residence and performed CPR.

Izzo, 75, was taken to Stony Brook University Hospital, where he was pronounced dead. Investigators do not suspect any foul play.

Izzo, who was the son of a New York City police officer, kicked off his career in law enforcement when he was 17 years old in 1968 as a police trainee, according to a QNS profile piece from 2011. He worked through the ranks and was promoted to chief of the Organized Crime Bureau in 2006.

Izzo also served as the commanding officer of the 115th Precinct in Jackson Heights, Queens, in 1995.

"His leadership and dedication to the people of New York City left a lasting legacy. Our thoughts are with his family and loved ones. May he rest in peace," the precinct wrote.

The NYPD Columbia Association, a fraternal organization representing Italian heritage in the department, described Izzo as a proud police chief and Italian-American.

"Chief Izzo was more than a distinguished member of the NYPD. He was a ... former Man of the Year honoree, and a longtime supporter and friend of our Association," the non-profit wrote. *Sonya Gugliara*

'FOOL' FIGHTER

By GABRIELLE FAHMY

She's unplugged from reality. A rent-striking, rising-star radical orchestrating the Mamdani administration's socialist housing agenda is the daughter of a famed music studio owner who recorded rock legends like David Bowie, the Ramones, Blondie, Lou Reed, Sonic Youth, the Foo Fighters and Coldplay, The Post has learned.

While framing herself as a champion of the proletariat, Tracy Rosenthal grew up in a trendy \$1.7 million NoMad pad with elite access to the music industry — attending the Grammys at least twice with her dad, four-time winner Steven Rosenthal.

Her father (below) recorded hit albums by some of the world's biggest artists at the Magic Shop, the SoHo studio he founded in 1988, including Coldplay's 2008 "Viva la Vida," which sold more than 10 million copies; the Foo Fighters' 2014 "Sonic Highways," for which he was interviewed in the band's HBO docuseries; and Bowie's final album, 2016's "Blackstar."

Yet despite her first-class upbringing, she's been on a four-year "rent strike" since moving back to New York City after a stint in Los Angeles — because the Bolshevik bugged out after spotting a cockroach in her hip \$2,300 a month Bed-Stuy apartment.

Sued for squatting

At a North Carolina Democratic Socialists of America meeting where she spoke last August, Rosenthal, 39 — who pridefully posed for a snap on Karl Marx's grave during a trip to London — sang the blues about what she claimed were horrendous conditions she had to endure in 2021.

"As soon as I moved in, I realized that we had roaches ... and I lost my mind," she said of the two-bedroom pad that occupies the top floor of a brownstone. "I was very angry. ... [It's] really gross."

She said the landlord refused to hire an exterminator, and after finding out the building had more rental units than were legally approved and facing foreclosure, she organized with the other tenants to eventually stop paying rent, stiffing the owner of at least \$108,000 on her unit alone.



Spoiled rock kid now DSA pro 'rent-skipper'

ZO RIDICULOUS: Tracy Rosenthal (above and right with Mayor Mamdani), who had an elite upbringing and a rock dad who worked with legends like David Bowie, now is a leader of the DSA "rent abolitionist" movement.

"We've been on rent strike ever since," she said proudly.

Her Bed-Stuy landlord, Adetunji Akinboboye, eventually lost the building to foreclosure in 2023.

U.S. Bank, the new owner, is now suing Rosenthal, along with four other tenants, for eviction, saying they have "squatted upon the premises," according to records filed in housing court in November. The cases are still before the courts.

Earlier this year, the building on quiet, tree-lined Hancock Street was placed under the Housing Preservation Department's Alter-

native Enforcement Program — meaning the landlord had a few months to address tenants' complaints. It was discharged from the program on July 14 after successfully resolving the complaints, according to a city notice taped to the front door this week.

'They feel entitled'

This is the same program the Mamdani administration wants to use to "seize housing," a previous Post analysis found — and which received a \$2 billion budget boost. It can lead to the city dragging the landlord to court if it doesn't do the repairs, and a housing court judge appointing a non-profit to take over the management of the building.

"They feel entitled to these properties," said Stu Smith, investigative analyst at the Manhattan Institute, who has been studying

Rosenthal — who posted "death to America" the night Mamdani clinched the Democratic primary last year — and the "rent abolitionist" movement.

"I consider her to be a saboteur, I consider her to be a gaslighter. And the fact that the Mamdani administration wants to highlight her as a hero speaks to the ethics and morality of the mayor's office."

Rosenthal's 2024 book "Abolish Rent" lays out the playbook of escalating tactics she used herself — starting with talking to neighbors to identify shared grievances and making collective demands all the way to rent strikes — with the broader goal of shifting control of housing away from landlords.

It's helped popularize a confrontational model of tenant activism and become a foundational tome for the DSA, which had her to speak to chapters the past two years.

Toxic vapors plague Gowanus-area school

Trouble in the air

PUTRID: Officials aren't certain if the polluted Gowanus Canal is causing dangerous fumes at a nearby elementary school, but adding an air-filtration system hasn't been effective.

Breathing uneasy

Toxic fumes are still being detected in the air at PS 372's annex at 219 First St. near the Gowanus Canal.

PS 372 Main building
512 Carroll St.

PS 372 Main building
219 First St.

Gowanus Canal

BROOKLYN

NY Post Design

Heavenly Saidman for the NY Post

By SONYA GUGLIARA

About 450 young kids at a special-needs elementary school near Brooklyn's putrid Gowanus Canal have been breathing toxic fumes in their building more than two years after the state vowed to fix the problem.

The state Department of Environmental Conservation installed an air-filtration system at the annex for PS 372 at 219 First St. in 2025 — but it failed to adequately purify contaminated air.

Yet parents only learned last week that their kids have been possibly endangered for two years and that the school still might not be safe for the coming school year.

Despite the yearslong mitigation efforts, traces of potentially cancer-causing vapors and other hazardous substances were detected.

Officials are not sure if the bad air comes from the polluted canal or from "unknown secondary sources," the DEC revealed last month to Principal Rosa Amato and Father Orlando Ruiz of Our Lady of Peace Church, which owns the school's buildings.

The school's pre-K and kindergarten classrooms are located in the annex, around the corner from the main building at 512 Carroll St.

Gym, science and specialty classes are also taught there for all grades.

Parent Julia Finnegan, whose two kids are entering fifth grade and pre-K at the school, said officials have been trying to reassure the school community that "it would take a lifetime of exposure" for the chemicals to cause health risks.

"But these are our youngest, smallest children," she said. "If

they stay at the school for pre-K and kindergarten, that's half their lives they've spent in this space exposed to chemicals."

Parents surprised

Parents have been left in the dark, she added.

"We were under the understanding as families that this system was up and running and working," said Finnegan of the filter system. "But little did we know they were continuing to do testing. ... and they have discovered that there's basically still chemicals and vapors being found in the air with the system running."

Officials admitted that some of the chemicals detected inside the annex — including cancer-linked byproducts of the gas industry such as benzene and xylene, "are

above levels that would typically be found in indoor air," the DEC and the State Health Department told The Post in a joint statement.

But they were "determined not to pose an increased health risk," the officials insisted.

Environmental groups are not buying it.

"The school epitomizes the massive uncontrolled toxic hazards throughout the entire Gowanus Canal area," said Walter Hang, the president of Environmental Health Research Group, which leads toxic cleanup campaigns across the state. Another elementary school, PS 32 on Union Street, sits on the east side of the canal.

"The state has completely failed to protect the health of the students, the faculty and the staff in the school."

sgugliara@nypost.com

Suit over keg blast at bar

A true bar fiasco.

An exploding keg at a New York City bar allegedly left an unsuspecting school teacher with severe injuries, according to a recently filed lawsuit.

Steven Garrand was enjoying an evening at a Hamilton Heights bar — ironically called Bar Fiasco — in

October 2022 when the booze barrel allegedly blasted on the second floor.

The 42-year-old, an elementary physical education teacher, is demanding unspecified damages stemming from the alcoholic debacle.

Bar Fiasco, which boasts craft beer and natural

wines, and Garrand's attorney did not immediately return requests for comment.

Injury — and in extreme cases, death — by keg isn't as uncommon as one may think.

A Brazilian man named Gilson do Nascimento, 43, died at his birthday party in 2021 while trying to fix a malfunctioning keg. *Sonya Gugliara*

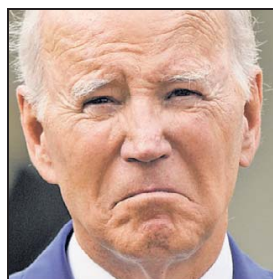
100s stranded on NJT train

About 700 people — many of them returning to New York City from a Chris Brown concert in New Jersey — were trapped on a disabled New Jersey Transit train in stifling heat for about two hours before being evacuated early Saturday, according to the FDNY and passengers.

The train stalled at around 1:45 a.m. and passengers — many of whom had been at the concert at MetLife Stadium that also featured R&B artist Usher — were left without electricity and air-conditioning, a woman said in a video posted to YouTube by videographer Dakota Santiago.

The video shows the passengers walking along a train platform at Manhattan's Moynihan Train Hall station behind members of the FDNY after they were removed from the train.

NJT declined to comment to The Post by Saturday evening. *Sofia Poznansky and Tina Moore*



JOE BIDEN
'Still out there.'

'Painful' cancer on move: Hunter

Hunter Biden has revealed his father's prostate cancer has spread and is "very painful" for the former president.

"The cancer has spread, metastasized into his bones and further," he told the BBC about former President Biden Friday. "It's very painful and it's very debilitating in many respects."

Biden, 83, announced last May that he was diagnosed with stage four prostate cancer.

"It's really sad to watch," Hunter Biden said. "The only thing that I'd say about my dad, about his health right now, is I wish he would complain more, because it's not good."

Joe Biden has continued to play a public role, appearing with Maryland Democrats at their "Fight Back and Win" gala near Baltimore in late June.

Earlier that month, he appeared at the opening of the new Obama library in Chicago. He drew comments when he came to a lectern afterward and asked, "Where's my granddaughter?"

Hunter Biden, 56, noted that his dad is "still out there."

"He's still doing his thing," he said. "He so believes in this country."

The elder Biden is still working on his memoir, "Promise Me, America."

Former first lady Jill Biden last week told interviewer Kelly Ripa that she had noticed a potential health concern while in the White House when her husband would get up to use the bathroom as many as "seven times a night."

Geoff Earle, *With Wires*

DON'T FAKE IT, RACHEL SAYS

Race fraud's sex tip

By DAVID SPECTOR

For my new sex coach, nothing is black or white.

After striking out with women for years, I knew I needed to learn the art of performing under pressure.

Naturally, I turned to a world-class authority on publicly faking it: Rachel Dolezal.

The notorious former head of the Spokane, Wash., NAACP turned OnlyFans model — who now goes by Nkechi Diallo — is pursuing her latest career turn as a certified sex coach.

The single mother of three children is currently a sex coach intern completing her coursework at the Sexology Institute online. If all goes well, the climax of her hard work will be a sex coach certification and the rescuing of my flat-lining love life.

I met her for a no-holds-barred virtual session Friday where we covered a wide range of spicy topics from "dad bod" kinks to her trip to a BDSM dungeon.

Before meeting, she had me complete a rigorous questionnaire filled with saucy questions, including how many sexual partners I've had and when was my last orgasm?

It was a background check far more intense than anything she experienced as an adjunct instructor of Africana Education

at Eastern Washington University, which booted her in 2015 after it emerged she was born to white Montana parents despite claiming to be black.

As a single man in my 30s, striking up conversations with attractive women can be a daunting prospect.

Diallo told me the key is honest communication.

'Just be yourself'

"Just be yourself," she offered, without a hint of irony.

"Don't approach someone with the goal of any particular outcome, don't misrepresent yourself, just try to have a nice conversation that you mutually enjoy," she advised.

When I confessed that I've become self-conscious of recently gaining 20 pounds, the "In Full Color" author insisted that I should feel comfortable in my own skin.

"There's a kink for everything, a whole world of women who like the bigger-the-better belly. You can cultivate a dad bod physique," said Diallo, who wore a sultry black dress during the session.

As a bisexual, she said she empathized with single men like me who just can't figure women out.

"I know women can be a lot,

they can be complex," she said.

The key to any healthy sexual relationship is communication — if you're not willing to state what you want, you may never get it, she said.

"I've talked to friends married for 15 years, who never knew the other person liked to be choked a little," she said.

As part of her 300-hour certification process, Diallo did a "field trip" to a BDSM dungeon,

she said proudly.

Diallo — who now identifies only as "human" and not by race, but still feels closer to black culture — said she's been on the dating scene herself and is looking for a traditional partner.

She admitted her headline-grabbing past can make this an uphill battle.

"Being a Scorpio, we're always known as the freaks," she said.

BLACK, WHITE & BLUE: Race imposter Rachel Dolezal is close to becoming a certified sex coach, and gave a Post reporter some help with his sex life.



Courtesy of Nkechi Diallo

Senate OKs Blanche as att'y general

The Senate narrowly confirmed acting Attorney General Todd Blanche on Saturday to lead the Justice Department on a permanent basis under President Trump.

Blanche's nomination was approved in a 50-49 vote, with two Republicans, Sens. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) and Susan Collins (R-Maine),

voting with all Democrats against his confirmation.

Blanche's path to confirmation was precarious, with his nomination repeatedly appearing in doubt.

Senators from both sides of the aisle expressed concerns over his handling of the release of documents related to notorious sex

criminal Jeffrey Epstein and a May 19 DOJ order that authorized the creation of \$1.776 billion "anti-weaponization" fund and granted Trump, his family and business entities immunity from IRS audits as part of the settlement of a lawsuit the president filed against the tax-collecting agency.

Blanche had declared the fund "dead" during his July 15 hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee, but his confirmation vote was delayed after Sens. John Cornyn (R-Texas) and Thom Tillis (R-NC) demanded a "written document" affirming that and clarifying whether the president and

his family were shielded from future IRS audits.

Blanche, a 51-year-old Colorado native and Trump's former personal lawyer, has been the acting head of the Justice Department since April 2, when the president elevated him after firing Pam Bondi.

Victor Nava

Push caused vic to miss dad's funeral

Subway shove at low point



William Farrington (2); Courtesy Aaron Kareem Watson

By KHRISTINA NARIZHNAYA
and RICH CALDER

He had a guardian angel looking out for him.

The 27-year-old man pushed onto Manhattan subway tracks following a stare-down with a sicko straphanger is an Army soldier who was on leave and trying to attend his father's funeral.

Aaron Kareem Watson told The Post he was en route Friday morning to attend the funeral of Alfred Kenneth Watson, who died in a Brooklyn fire last month, when he got into an argument with another passenger on the E train over who stared at whom first.

The suspect followed Watson off the southbound train as it pulled into the West 4th Street Station in Greenwich Village and later shoved him onto the tracks from the platform after the train pulled away, authorities said.

Quick-thinking bystanders hauled Watson back onto the platform before disaster struck.



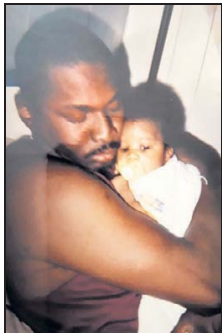
ON LEAVE: Aaron Kareem Watson (top) was pushed onto the tracks at West 4th Street Station while en route to his dad's (above) funeral.

The soldier had minor bruises and scratches and was taken to Bellevue Hospital.

'Devastated'

However, the incident caused him to miss the funeral for his father, who died July 23 in East New York, Brooklyn, and would have turned 63 on Saturday.

"It's a very hard thing to deal



with — especially because I wasn't expecting him to pass away, especially in the way that he did," said Watson, who joined the Army two months ago and was undergoing basic training in Georgia before being granted temporary leave. "I was struggling a bit during my time in the military, so I imagine missing [the funeral] didn't help either."

Watson said he believed the

suspect, described as a stocky man about 5-foot-7, is homeless. He's still on the run and no arrest has been made, cops said.

"I wasn't really in the best mood, but, during the train ride, I saw someone staring at me and staring at me very hard for a while," said Watson.

"I got agitated over it, and while I was coming out of the train ... I pretty much said, 'I don't know why you're staring at me so hard, guy?'"

"He came out of the train while I was getting off, and followed me up the stairs, and he was just shouting at me all the time, being very aggressive and instigating a fight with me."

Watson visited his aunt, Sylvia Watson, at her home in East New York on Saturday.

She teared up while discussing her family's recent misfortune.

"I am devastated, because what else could go wrong?" she said. "He took his father's death too hard. He didn't get a chance to see his dad. It's rough."

Ex-hoops pros make 'trans' bid for WNBA

Former NBA players Enes Kanter Freedom and Royce White are looking to make a comeback — and a political point — by declaring for the 2027 WNBA Draft.

The former NBA first-rounders claimed to be transgender Friday in a stunt to test the merits of the WNBA's policy on trans athletes playing in the women's league.

Freedom, whose 11-year NBA career included stops with the Knicks and Utah Jazz, posted on X, "I'm officially declaring myself a @WNBA prospect."

"If simply declaring who you are is all that's required, then I meet every single requirement necessary to compete in the WNBA. My team and I have carefully examined the WNBA's eligibility criteria and governing framework surrounding self-identification and inclusion," added Freedom, 34.

White, a 35-year-old Republican candidate for Senate who only played three games in his short NBA career, followed Freedom's lead and vowed his own spirited comeback bid shortly after.

"I'm transgender. I'm a woman. I identify as sometimes identifying as a woman for purpose of basketball, professional basketball, so I'll be declaring for the WNBA draft in 2027 as well," White insisted with a straight face to Fox News.

The Women's National Basketball Players Association refused to address eligibility but issued a statement about the controversy.

"We embrace justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion," the union said. "Hate, abuse, and demonization of any person or group of people, including transgender people, only fuel fear, division, and harm. We will continue to have hard conversations. But we will not be used as political pawns."

Shane Galvin and Rich Calder

Beauty's ouster not over faith: pageant

Producers of the Miss North Carolina USA pageant have rejected ex-winner Brittany Boltinhouse's claim that she was stripped of her crown for being a conservative Christian.

"A Blaize Productions' decision was not based on Brittany Boltinhouse's political views, religious beliefs, or protected personal

viewpoints. Our organization includes people from various backgrounds, political views, personal beliefs and values. We welcome and celebrate that," a rep for A Blaize Productions said in a statement to The Post on Saturday.

"The decision followed a careful review of the totality of information that came to

our attention, including previously undisclosed conduct and public content spanning multiple years that was inconsistent with the standards and responsibilities expected of a Miss North Carolina USA titleholder under the agreements governing the position," the statement continued.

Boltinhouse, 27, was formally

stripped of her title Wednesday after posts of her allegedly using the N-word resurfaced, NC Beat reported.

However, in an interview with the Carolina Journal Friday, Boltinhouse (right) said she believes her religious affiliation and political views were the reason her rank was yanked.

"I believe and think I was

stripped from my title because of my political stance and my belief system as a conservative Christian woman," Boltinhouse said.

"I am proud of my faith — I am proud of my standards," said the member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Shane Galvin and Daniel Cody



@espinosa/instagram

THE BATTLE FOR IRAN

By DAVID SPECTOR

The brother of a star Iranian athlete sentenced to death after bravely protesting against the repressive Islamic regime is begging President Trump to broker an 11th-hour miracle.

Arash Naghdi is desperate for the president to intervene in his brother's case during negotiations with Iran and pressure the Ayatollah to stay his execution.

"Please help us, do everything you can to save my brother," an emotional Arash Naghdi, 37, implored during an interview with The Post from Shiraz, Iran.

Benyamin Naghdi, a champion kickboxer who was once a member of the national team, was sentenced to death in May for allegedly using a makeshift flamethrower to stave off security forces at an anti-regime protest in January.

Naghdi was charged with "enmity against God" and the Iranian Supreme Court upheld the death sentence on July 30, leaving the family with little time and fewer options to save Benyamin's life.

Psychological torture

The family hasn't been given an exact date for his hanging, but they fear it is imminent.

"He's only 26 years old, he has his whole life ahead of him, he deserves the chance to live, to dream, to build a future," Arash said, choking back tears.

Arash said he has been receiving threatening phone calls from unlisted numbers. Yet despite fears of being arrested himself, he's compelled to speak out to try to convince the US and the international community to save his brother.

"My plea is simple and heartfelt: please help my brother, please save his life."

Arash said he hasn't been allowed to visit his brother in prison but his parents were allowed a "final goodbye" two months ago — part of psychological torture the regime im-

Provided to the New York Post



DESPERATION: Former champion kickboxer Benyamin Naghdi is set to be hanged by Iran for allegedly using a flamethrower at an anti-regime protest, and his brother is imploring President Trump to intervene.

Condemned Iranian's kin begs Don

poses on families of the convicted.

His father described Benyamin as an emaciated ghost of his former self.

"I'm convinced he was tortured, he's lost all hope ... he called our cousin and threatened to harm himself in an attempt to delay his execution," Arash said, his voice trembling with rage and terror.

Executions resumed

The Islamic regime has executed at least 56 people on trumped-up charges since

March — 27 of whom were arrested during the January protests.

The president in January vowed the US would take "very strong action" against the Islamic Republic should they hang protesters, and stated the regime called off executions at his behest.

But the nation Monday executed political prisoners Omid Behzad and Pouria Safvat after they were convicted of spying for Israel.

The Iranian security forces turned the January protests into a bloodbath, slaughtering at

least 52,000 demonstrators, according to figures cited by Trump.

Arash said he is convinced that his brother was trying to protect himself and his fellow protesters from security forces who are seen chasing him down on motorcycles in a horrifying video.

"He acted in self defense," he said.

The regime publicly hanged two protesters in Isfahan in late July and broadcast footage of their executions inside the prison, causing Benyamin's mental state to spiral, Arash said.

Benyamin was held in solitary confinement for months and only transferred to the general population less than a month ago after going on a 10-day hunger strike.

Benyamin had put his athletic aspirations aside to support his family after his father's health deteriorated due to chemical weapons exposure from the Iran-Iraq War.

"Benyamin is the backbone of our family, he was always looking out for everyone else ... even from prison he calls me to tell me to take care of our mother," said Arash.

IRGC: Strait not open until demands met

Iran's top security official Saturday threw cold water on hopes for a full reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, claiming the waterway will not be restored to normal traffic "until America corrects its behavior."

Supreme National Security Council Secretary Mohammad Baqer Zolqadr, a

deputy commander with the IRGC, issued the sweeping list of Iran's drastic conditions for a full reopening.

The demands involve a complete US military withdrawal from the region, the lifting of sanctions against Iran and ending attacks against Iran's

proxies in the Middle East, including Hezbollah, Hamas and the Houthis.

"The Supreme National Security Council will never back down, neither in war nor in negotiations," Zolqadr threatened.

The threat came as earlier in the week Iran appeared close to a tempo-

rary deal with Oman to create a narrow shipping corridor while a permanent deal gets negotiated.

But with Iran now demanding concessions once sought to roll back its nuclear program simply to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, President Trump could be steered back to-

ward the military option he shelved just days ago.

"We're really in the middle of the game here. This thing is not over. It's obviously not at the beginning. We're in the middle of the game, and we're applying a whole host of tools — diplomatic, economic, military tools — to ensure that

we get the best outcome for the American people," Vice President JD Vance told Fox News on Saturday.

"What we're really working through now is how you can actually set up a traffic scheme so that the ships that pass can pass through safely," he said.

Gabrielle Fahmy

ELECTION 2026

Cash for mainstream & far left

HEIRESS
HEDGES
DEM BET

By GEOFF EARLE

Multibillionaire heiress Elizabeth Simons is pouring hundreds of thousands of dollars into the Democratic Party's campaign to retake the House, even as she bankrolls the socialist causes and candidates that have the party's establishment increasingly on edge.

Simons, who previously cut a \$250,000 check to a super PAC backing Mayor Mamdani, has donated \$354,000 to the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the party's chief House campaign arm, and thousands more to individual House candidates.

The donations, ironically, put Simons behind the same Democratic leadership forces trying to prevent the party's increasingly powerful progressive wing from taking over.

"I can see why a lot of the very woke left is lining up with [House Minority Leader] Hakeem [Jeffries] because the goal is winning the House," said one longtime Democratic fundraiser.

The DCCC is headed by Rep. Suzan DelBene (D-Wash.), a member of the centrist New Democrat Coalition, which is the under guidance of Jeffries, who is positioned to be-

come speaker if Dems snatch back the House. Republicans currently rule, 218-212.

Simons is hardly a conventional Democratic donor. She has poured millions into progressive education initiatives while backing candidates like Mamdani.

Chair of foundation

Simons is chair of the board of the Heising-Simons Foundation, which she co-founded with her husband, Mark Heising. Her father, James Simons, founded the hedge fund Renaissance Technologies, and was worth an estimated \$31.4 billion at the time of his death in 2024.

Last August, she gave \$250,000 to New Yorkers for Lower Costs, the largest contribution to the group backing democratic socialist Mamdani's mayoral bid against former Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

Her "woke math" support came in the form of \$1.7 million in contributions by the foundation to the Racial Justice in Early Mathematics Project at Chicago's Erikson Institute.

She and three other California heavy hitters have given to such



OVERLY GENEROUS: Elizabeth Simons has given hundreds of thousands of dollars to elect a Democratic House majority, but also is funding radical hopefuls who could undo that effort.

causes as anti-incarceration prosecutors and cash bail opponents, donating \$22 million to ballot measures and candidates in the 2022 election cycle, according to Politico.

'Anti-police agenda'

"Democrats aren't just embracing a socialist, anti-police agenda, they're being bankrolled to do it. Every Democrat backing this radical, pro-crime platform will answer to voters this fall," blasted Emily Tuttle, a spokeswoman for

the National Republican Congressional Committee, the GOP's DCCC counterpart.

Simons and three other California megadonors — Patty Quillin, Quinn Delaney and Kaitlyn Krieger — have contributed nearly \$4 million to House Democrats and Democratic committees this election cycle, Federal Election Commission data shows.

Simons and her foundation did not respond to a request for comment on her contributions and strategy.

gearle@nypost.com

Help for
surprise
nominee

National Republicans are rallying around a complete unknown who stunned the party Tuesday by winning a Michigan congressional primary over President Trump's hand-picked candidate.

Thomas Smith, a retired GM engineer who sells salsa to Flint farmer's markets, convincingly beat Trump-backed Amir Hassan despite spending virtually nothing and even dropping out of the campaign and endorsing another candidate weeks ago.

"He's just as shocked as everyone," a Smith consultant told The Post. Smith won 50.4% of the vote to Hassan's 33%, and Smith-endorsee Al Lemmo's 16%.

Republicans "plan to go on offense" to support Smith against Democratic incumbent Kristen McDonald Rivet, a GOP operative told The Post.

The result was especially stunning because Hassan had spent \$623,000 through July.

Republicans are already trying to turn the outcome into an opportunity.

Trump carried the 8th District by just 2 percentage points in 2024, and the Cook Political Report rates the November race "Lean Democrat." McDonald Rivet is a member of the centrist New Democrat Coalition. Geoff Earle

Veep slams 'crazy' El-Sayed

Vice President JD Vance ripped radical Michigan Senate candidate Abdul El-Sayed on Saturday, predicting he'd be a "terrible senator" if elected.

"I think the guy's crazy and would be a terrible senator for the people of Michigan," Vance told Fox News days after El-Sayed's

remarkable victory in the Michigan Democratic primary for a US Senate seat — and after the anti-Israel politician mocked him for "sucking up to power."

"We're going to make that case, and obviously, the people of Michigan are going to make their vote," added Vance, who called

El-Sayed an "odd guy."

"I think that it's telling that instead of talking about what he wants to do to make the lives of Michiganders better, he takes personal insults at me," he said.

"I'm the vice president. It comes with the territory," he added. Geoff Earle

Carville warns of radical rise

Veteran Democratic strategist James Carville told Fox News Digital that 2028 will decide the future of the Democratic Party, not 2026, saying all he can do is try to advise them not to make the wrong choice.

In recent months, there has been a rising faction of far-left Democratic candi-

dates winning primaries in multiple states, and some more moderate figures are alarmed.

"I am not going to be in the same party with Hasan Piker," Carville said on "The Sunday Briefing," referring to a streamer who has made controversial remarks like claiming Amer-

ica deserved 9/11, which he later walked back. "If he becomes a force in a Democratic Party, I'm out of here. I have no intention of ever being in the same political party with that guy."

Carville told Fox News that the party stands at a historic crossroads.

Fox News



Michael Goodwin

mgoodwin@nypost.com

In the run-up to Michigan's hotly contested Democratic Senate primary last week, a slew of headlines declared the showdown a "fight for the party's soul."

As clichés go, that wasn't a bad one. Leaving aside the issue of whether a political party has a soul, the framing worked because the candidates represented starkly different positions, backgrounds and styles.

The outcome would thus reflect the party's emerging values and agenda in a key swing state.

And so it did, but in a way that simultaneously makes Michigan look bad and illustrates how radicals are gaining the upper hand in the national party.

After far-left, anti-Israel candidate Dr. Abdul El-Sayed squeaked out a narrow victory against the more moderate Rep. Haley Stevens, new clichés were called upon to explain the outcome.

Dem Senate Leader Chuck Schumer, despite being a frequent target of El-Sayed's, quickly fell in line and congratulated him.

Schumer, the highest elected Jewish official in American history, defended his move by insisting his party is "a big tent." He told PunchBowl News that Dems have a chance to gain a majority only when they "welcome rather than suppress opposing visions of its future," and declared himself in favor of "big tent-ism."

Because Schumer is fixated on becoming majority leader again, his self-serving appeal has its limits. One of El-Sayed's most notorious backers quickly replied by saying, hell, no.

Hasan Piker, a social media star and virulent antisemite who once said America deserved 9/11, was in no mood for kumbaya.

He demanded that Dems who didn't support El-Sayed suffer "Marxist-Leninist punishment" for failing to "follow the party line."

He called them "haters in our ranks" who were giving ammunition to Republicans. "You can't be out here saying like, 'Oh, I'm a centrist Democrat. And I think Abdul is a bridge too far.' That must be punished."

Dems with a more traditional vision took aim at him. Among them was Neera Tanden, head of the Center for American Progress, a party think tank and hiring hall. She warned that Piker's rhetoric could alienate general election voters and give GOP candidate



Mike Rogers a path to victory in November.

"It's hard to imagine a bigger turnout to swing voters than this guy," Tanden wrote on X. "My free advice to the AES campaign is to get him to shut up."

Rogers had a similar thought, posting a video where he said, "If you're among the majority of Democratic voters that woke up on Wednesday feeling, well, hopeless, because the person who won does not represent your values, well, just know, there is still hope."

More bile

But Piker is not the only El-Sayed backer who could scare away general election voters.

In a sermon last month, a Muslim cleric in Dearborn Heights, Michigan, celebrated the death of GOP Sen. Lindsey Graham and asked worshippers to pray for President Trump's death.

He also urged them to vote for El-Sayed.

Mohammad Baqer Qazwini made the remarks at the Islamic Institute of America, according to the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), and published by the Jerusalem Post.

It said the imam blamed Graham for "genocide in Gaza" and for the deaths of civilians in Lebanon, and called his death "a slap" from Allah.

Then he asked worshippers to pray that Allah would take "the friend of Lindsey Graham," meaning Trump.

Separately, the Washington Free Beacon reported that Qazwini declared that Muslim men and women have a "moral responsibility" and "duty" to support El-Sayed because he is a Muslim.

In a late July sermon, the outlet reports, he urged his audience to "deal the Zionist a bigger blow" by voting against Stevens, whom he said served Israeli interests.

The Michigan outcome is part of a larger pattern where candidates from the progressive swamps are taking over the national party.

Although the heart of their domestic agenda aims at creating a larger, more expensive and powerful central government in the style of European socialism, antisemitism and a demonization of Israel are also main tenets.

Last month, nearly half of House Dems voted to cut off all military aid to Israel at a time when the Jewish state, the only democracy in the region, is also our major ally in the war against Iran.

Power shift

As the Wall Street Journal noted, only 17% of House Democrats voted for a similar bill two years ago.

It said members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus made up the majority of votes against Israel in the recent vote.

The emergence and growth of that caucus demonstrates the power shift within the party. Much of it, I believe, was ignited by the nonstop personal hatred Dems like Schumer and Nancy

Pelosi expressed against Trump.

Biden's effort to jail the then ex-president also broke the guardrails of acceptable behavior.

Those leaders started a fire which, fanned by their media handmaidens, is burning beyond control and consuming their party.

New York City's election of Zohran Mamdani as mayor last year stands as the clearest example of how voters, especially young ones, are turning against traditions and embracing a new generation of candidates with extreme agendas.

It is also relevant that Mamdani is the city's first Muslim mayor, and El-Sayed would be America's first Muslim senator.

Both have falsely charged Israel with committing genocide in Gaza, and expressed deep animus toward Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Mamdani reluctantly dropped his effort to have Netanyahu arrested if he comes to New York, but there are signs that his attacks are leading to increased street violence against Jews.

The rise of antisemitism in New York and across America cannot be denied. In that vein, Trump declared El-Sayed's victory "Great news for the Republican Party."

On Truth Social, he called the winner "a Communist loser who hates Jews and Israel," adding that now, "the Democrats crazy policies will only get worse!"

Even Hillary Clinton seemed to see what Trump saw and is worried about what she predicted would be the GOP line of attack against El-Sayed.

On a podcast, she said charges that he is a communist would have an impact on many swing voters, especially independents.

"It's not just about Michigan, but the Republican messaging is communist, socialist. It's going to be a very effective attack," she said.

Effective because it's true, and events in Gotham are proving the point.

Consider that Tina Moore, the Post's veteran NYPD bureau chief, reports that New York's Finest are "bracing for a security nightmare" during Netanyahu's visit to the United Nations next month.

She writes that cops are saying the mayor's obsession with the prime minister will "embolden radical agitators, leaving frontline cops and everyday New Yorkers squarely in the crosshairs."

She quotes a law enforcement source as saying the mayor is "making what would be considered a Category 1 hurricane into a Category 5 because of his words."

Incriminating tape of alleged Tupac

By JAMES DESBOROUGH and
MICHAEL KAPLAN

THE gangbanger who allegedly ordered the murder of Tupac Shakur undermined his own defense in a braggadocious phone call to his mistress, The Post can exclusively reveal.

Duane “Keffe D” Davis contradicted his stance that he lied about orchestrating rapper Shakur’s Las Vegas 1996 drive-by shooting, stated in his own memoir, which he has since claimed was all penned by a ghost writer.

In the seven-minute jail call to his female pal, whose ID is not revealed, she asks him: “What’s this book they say you wrote?” to which Keffe replies: “Oh, yeah, I did.”

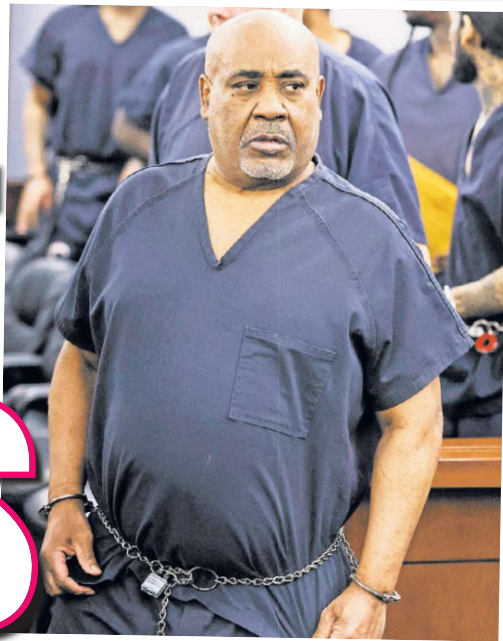
Prosecutors allege Davis — a member of South Side Compton Crips gang — was in a car with his nephew, Orlando Anderson, and threw him the gun used to shoot 25-year-old Shakur four times.

Davis, 63, was first named as being behind the hit in Los Angeles detective Greg Kading’s 2011 book “Murder Rap.” In the jail call, made days after his 2023 arrest, he railed on the former cop over the heat it brought on him.

“He had my life f--ked up. I crawled up under a rock for six years. I just got tired of it. You don’t say that s--t . . . they don’t know the motherf--king truth,” he tells the woman — who refers to Davis as her “husband,” despite him being married to some-

GANGSTERS:
Tupac Shakur was shot four times in a Las Vegas drive-by in September 1996. Duane “Keffe D” Davis (bottom right) is now set to stand trial, accused of being the gang member who ordered his murder.

JUDGMENT
DAY LOOMS



Getty Images (2); Adobe Stock; Reuters; Splash News (2); Youtube

murderer revealed ahead of his trial

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New York Post, Sunday, August 9, 2026

nypost.com



EVIDENCE: Cops presenting evidence tied to the Shakur murder case, including the last ever picture of him, taken by a fan at a traffic light just minutes before he was shot.

one else.

The call, obtained by The Post also corroborates Davis' link to other key people, including Devonta "Dirt Rock" Lee, who gave key testimony in the grand jury indictment and will be a witness in the trial, as well as other Crip gang affiliates.

It is expected to be used by prosecutors as evidence against Davis when his murder trial begins on Monday in Las Vegas.

"California Love" rapper Shakur was riding with label boss Marion "Suge" Knight on the Las Vegas strip when he was shot after a Mike Tyson boxing match on Sept. 7, 1996. He died from his injuries in hospital six days later.

Drive by

On the night of Shakur's shooting he'd had an altercation with Anderson, Davis' nephew, in the lobby of the MGM Grand hotel immediately after the Tyson fight.

As Davis recounts in his book, "Compton Street Legend," following Anderson's beating — which was caught on security camera — he told him: "We couldn't let no record company studio gangsters do us like that," and went to find their adversaries.

Davis and his crew took their rented white Cadillac and looked for Shakur and Knight.

"According to Keffe D., he's in the front passenger seat with a 40-caliber Glock they picked up in Vegas," a law enforcement insider close to the case told The Post.

Davis claims in his book he "tossed the Glock in the backseat" after they stocked up on Dom Perignon at a liquor store.

They then encountered Knight and Shakur, who were on their way to night spot Club 662,

around 11:15 p.m. Davis allegedly pulled up alongside their black BMW with Knight behind the wheel. "Pac pulled out a strap," his book claims, referring to a gun, "and that's when the fireworks started."

Davis has always maintained Anderson — who died aged just 23 in a gang shootout two years later — pulled the trigger.

Two other people were in the car with Davis and Anderson that night, but have also died, leaving him and Knight the only people alive who can testify.

A family friend told The Post Davis' wife, Paula "is livid with Keffe for opening his big mouth and causing this problem."

Rap war

At the time of Shakur's death, he was caught up in the notorious East vs. West Coast gangster rap war, which pitted him and Knight's Death Row Records against New York's Bad Boy Records, founded by Sean

"Diddy" Combs and led by his protégé Christopher "Biggie Smalls" Wallace.

Associates of Bad Boy and Wallace were present when Shakur was shot multiple times at Quad Studios in Manhattan in November 1994 — initially sparking that feud, which led to multiple shootings and rap diss tracks.

Shakur and Knight were also associated with the Bloods street gang, while Diddy is rumored to have then had ties to the Crips, both based out of Los Angeles and at war with each other.

Despite the animosity, no one in the rap or gang worlds would speak to the cops, making investigating the murder much harder.

Knight is currently serving a 28-year sentence behind bars after fatally running over a rival record label owner with a truck in 2015.

The East-West rap battle claimed its second most high-profile victim, Wallace, in March 1997. He was also killed in a drive-by shooting, which took place outside the Peterson Automotive museum in Los Angeles, and he was also shot four times. He had just attended a party to mark the release of his second album "Life After Death."

Wallace's murder remains unsolved, but the motive is widely accepted as being in retaliation for the murder of Shakur.

It was during the investigation into Wallace's death that Davis first came to the attention of authorities. The Los Angeles Police Department brought him in for questioning in December 2008, and knowing of his gang ties, asked him about the murder.

"The LAPD was working on a case against Davis for allegedly

trafficking large quantities of PCP and cocaine. He said, 'I can't tell you anything about [Biggie]. But I can tell you about the case in Las Vegas,'" the law enforcement source told The Post.

Agreement with cops

Davis was given a proffer agreement, a process in which anything self-incriminating a subject says during interviews cannot then be used to prosecute him.



PLAYBOY: The rapper — shown in one of his videos — was at the peak of his popularity when he was killed.

"Keffe's nephew was always the primary suspect," the insider added. "He was a known shooter, he was already a suspect in at least one other murder, and he was the one attacked by Tupac."

"He also was a known gang member. So, Orlando had motive and means. So Keffe D. basically corroborated what everybody always suspected ... but he tossed the gun onto the backseat," indicating, as the senior gang member, he wanted Anderson to carry out the shooting.

Sources believe Davis misunderstood how the terms of his agreement with cops worked when he suddenly started talking about being the "shot caller" years later.

"He started going on different platforms and talking about the murder. I think his narcissism and hubris blinded him to the reality that you can't talk about this stuff."

While material submitted in a proffer session can't be used in court to prosecute the crime police are investigating at that time, law enforcement sources made it clear that admitting to a crime publicly will always make you liable for it.

On Sept. 29, 2023, police arrested Davis in front of his home in Henderson, Nevada.

In his jailhouse call he was confident of beating the rap, saying: "I got some good ass attorney ... He came out of retirement to help me and he got all my stuff. So I got a big ass win."

Top Vegas lawyer Mike Sanft is representing Davis.

He would not comment about the phone call to The Post but called the Clark County District Attorney's case "weak."

Sanft claimed Davis was "exercising his First Amendment right to free speech, even though it is not in good taste," with his book.

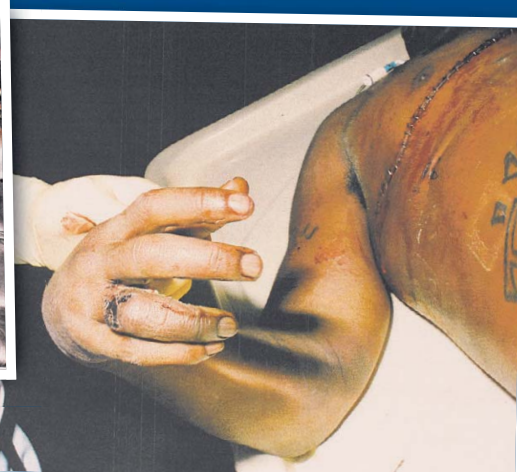
The trial is expected to provide some explosive moments, with Knight on the witness list.

Hip hop fans are also intrigued to hear if Wallace's former boss, Diddy — currently in federal prison on prostitution related charges — is brought up during trial. But mostly they are excited about finally finding out what actually happened on the night Shakur's legend was cut short.

BLOODY SCENE



Police evidence photos show the black BMW which label boss Marion "Suge" Knight was driving with Shakur in the passenger seat, when rivals pulled up and opened fire. An autopsy photo also shows damage to Shakur's finger sustained in the shooting.



RR

‘Hammering, cursing’ heard by nabe



By **TINA MOORE**
and **ADRY TORRES**

Police are investigating the death of a woman whose body was discovered after what a neighbor described to The Post as hammering and cursing coming from her Brooklyn apartment.

Bensonhurst neighbors heard 30 minutes of mysterious and constant hammering in the early morning hours — before the 40-year-old woman was found dead of blunt force trauma in their building on 64th Street near 16th Avenue on Aug. 1.

“There was music and people singing around 12:15 a.m. and it stops around 2 a.m.,” said a man who identified himself as A.L.

“And then the hammer starts,” he said. “I recorded it. It was 30 minutes of hammering and it started with a strong one. When the hammer finish, I heard ‘F--k you!’”

After that, there was eerie silence, the neighbor said.

The woman, identified by family as Erika Miranda-Tlacua, was found shortly before 4 a.m., cops said.

GoFundMe started

EMS pronounced her dead on the scene, and NYPD detectives were seen going in and out of the house carrying evidence bags in the hours that followed.

There were no arrests as of Thursday and no suspect description, police said.

Her cousin Gris Aguirre started a GoFundMe account for Miranda-



OMINOUS: Neighbors say they heard hammering for 30 minutes followed by someone saying “f--k you” coming from the Brooklyn apartment of a woman who was found dead.

SCARY SOUNDS BEFORE DEATH

Tlacua, she told The Post in a text.

“With broken hearts, we ask for your support today during one of the most difficult times of our lives,” the Spanish-language post said.

“Our beloved cousin was the victim of an act of violence that has left us devastated. Her passing was sudden and painful, and now we face the daunting task of raising the necessary funds to cover the expenses and bring her body home so we can give her the dignified farewell she deserves.”

The effort has raised \$305 so far, and the money will be used to fly her body back to her native San Juan Tejaluca, a small village in

the central Mexican state of Puebla.

Aguirre, who lives in Red Bank, NJ, was planning to go to Brooklyn Monday because there hadn’t been an arrest in the case. She didn’t comment any further.

A woman who lives next door, who also asked to remain anonymous, said the news was disturbing.

Neighbors shocked

“This news has left me a bit shaken — just imagine, a dead person,” she said. “I think they said they found the apartment empty, with only the deceased

woman there. Just imagine — leaving someone like that all alone in the apartment.”

A UPS driver who identified himself as Ronald said he was “shocked” when he learned what happened at the two-story building.

“I was driving and saw the police car,” he said. “I didn’t know what exactly was going on, but when I went to my IG that’s when I found the post and I was like, ‘What! I was there earlier. What’s going on?’”

A man who lives nearby and asked to remain anonymous said the neighborhood had become more transient in recent years.

Mail car in fatal hit-run

Cops are hunting for a Postal Service driver who they say fatally struck a man in Hell’s Kitchen before driving off, one of two fatal hit-and-runs early Saturday, police said.

The 66-year-old victim was crossing Ninth Avenue mid-block near West 55th Street at around 5:30 a.m., when he was mowed down by the USPS vehicle, police said. He was pronounced dead at a hospital.

Another man had died in The Bronx about an hour and a half earlier.

The victim in that incident, believed to be in his late 50s, was lying in the street at College Avenue and East 166th Street at around 3:55 a.m., likely unconscious after being assaulted by another man about 10 minutes earlier, when he was struck by a white BMW, sources said.

The BMW didn’t stay. The man was then run over a second time by an NYPD vehicle when the operator didn’t see him, police said. They said the cop car wasn’t chasing the BMW.

The operator of the police vehicle stopped and administered medical attention.

The victim was then rushed to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Tina Moore
and Sonya Gugliara

‘After-hours club’ shoot

A man was shot in the stomach and arm when gunfire rang out inside a potential “after-hours club” in a high-rise in Midtown, Manhattan, on Saturday.

The victim, believed to be in his 30s, was shot inside 247 West 30th Street around 7:30 a.m., police said.

The man made his way outside and flagged down officers on the street, an NYPD spokesman said.

EMS rushed him to Bellevue Hospital, where he was undergoing surgery later, cops said.

There were no arrests and police were investigating.

The victim’s identity wasn’t released. Tina Moore

Lib arts college: No grades & no stress!

The University of Michigan’s liberal arts college said grades for incoming freshman during their first semester will be hidden and excluded from their transcripts to “curb the mental health crisis” among students.

Starting this fall, the public research university’s

College of Literature, Science, and the Arts will grade freshmen in their first semester solely on a pass/no credit basis instead of letter grades, the school announced in a statement.

LSA, the largest of the university’s 19 colleges, said that students will still know

their grades and receive feedback from professors, but their grades won’t be factored into their GPAs.

Transcripts will simply state that all first semester courses were automatically pass/no credit.

Their true grades will be internally recorded for aca-

demic awards, scholarships, internships, academic advising, professional opportunities, and if a student is switching to a major outside of LSA. Students in LSA will start seeing their grades recorded in their transcripts and reflected in their GPAs in

their second semester, the college noted.

Similar programs have also been adopted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, California Institute of Technology, Swarthmore College and Wellesley College.

Sonya Gugliara

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Why same actors dominate this year's movies



**JOHNNY
OLEKSINSKI**

Films revolve around 5 stars

AUDIENCES have gone back to the movies this summer after several years of will-they-won't-they tension. And filmmakers probably have found themselves thinking the exact same thing.

No, not "a Coke costs \$10?!" They're going, "You again?" Not that they mind multiple encounters with their favorite stars. But undeniably, through a strange confluence of factors, the big screen has been dominated by just a handful of top actors this year.

I've narrowed it down to a fantastic five: Zendaya, Tom Holland, Robert Pattinson, Anne Hathaway and Pedro Pascal.

These guys are everywhere. This quintet has practically turned Hollywood into a repertory company, a theater in which one group of performers appear in all the shows.

The shared cinematic DNA is dizzying.

Box office winners

Hathaway, Holland, Pattinson and Zendaya all memorably acted in Christopher Nolan's blazing July blockbuster "The Odyssey," which has surpassed \$1 billion at the worldwide box office.

The web expanded last weekend with just-married Holland and Zendaya in Sony and Marvel's "Spider-Man: Brand New Day" (\$1.3 billion already).

Months ago in April, Zendaya and Pattinson dropped jaws with A24's hot "The Drama" (\$132 million), and in December, they'll slap on the sunscreen for "Dune: Part 3" with Timothée "One Flick Per Year" Chalamet — a sure-thing winner.

Separately they're all just as dominant.



DÉJÀ VU: Tom Holland (from left), Robert Pattinson and Anne Hathaway each appeared in multiple blockbusters this year as a revitalized movie industry discovers what audiences want.

One of Hathaway's five movies in 2026 was the biggest comedy of the year, "The Devil Wears Prada 2" (\$691 million).

Brilliant Pattinson — who could have been a cartoon voice actor had it not been for, well, his jawline — has been on the lips of Oscar pundits as a best actor contender since the trailer dropped this week for his new drama "Primetime," in

which he transforms into "To Catch A Predator" host Chris Hansen. He's got an impressive four films this year.

And while Pascal doesn't have 2026 IMDB overlap with the others, he carried Baby Yoda and the "Star Wars" franchise on his shoulders in "The Mandalorian and Grogu" (a flop, I know). And in December, he'll play Reed Richards in

"Avengers: Doomsday." If that one flops, I'll quit and give my job to Cindy Adams!

Plus, his "Tar"-y fall movie "Behemoth!" plans to open the New York Film Festival, and many suspect that could land him his first Oscar nomination.

Of course, you could chalk up this pileup to coincidence. It's not as if all the above represented studios met in a secret

lair and decided to anoint these actors as the future of cinema.

But there's more to their frequent casting than pure timing. It shows that Hollywood, which is finally on the rise again after strikes and stagnation, is opening its eyes and recognizing who and what young audiences want to see instead of hopelessly praying that the aging stars of yore will enjoy a surprise resurgence.

Younger crowds

The moviegoing public has rapidly changed. Gen Z, today's leading ticket-buyers, loves Zendaya and Holland. The No. 2 attendees, Millennials, going back to "The Princess Diaries" and "Game of Thrones," revere Hathaway and Pascal. Pattinson shrewdly straddles both.

These folks, if you can believe it, mean far more to the paying masses than Tom Cruise, Brad Pitt and Leonardo DiCaprio do now.

The relative newbies choose adventurous projects, hopping from edgy arthouse to better-than-average action films. They work with cool directors: Christopher Nolan, Yorgos Lanthimos and Luca Guadagnino, among others. Their names are a marker of quality.

Another thing is that their fan bases admire them more for their acting ability than their celebrity status.

Meanwhile, the megastars of yesteryear don't pack 'em in like they used to. A best picture win doesn't change the fact that DiCaprio's "One Battle After Another" lost money. Cruise couldn't even sell the very good "Mission: Impossible 8."

Many pieces have been written about the death of the traditional movie star and how that demise would portend a cataclysmic disaster for the industry. Eh, not really. Everybody just misread the forecast. The sun's out, and Anne Hathaway's in five movies.

Fleetwood 'Mac'-up after rift Capsize by Liberty Is.

Lindsey Buckingham confirmed his yearslong feud with Fleetwood Mac bandmate Stevie Nicks is over. "Stevie and I are talking all the time now," Buckingham told E! News at Variety's Power of Young Hollywood event on Thursday.

The 76-year-old musician also teased that "next year should be a pretty interesting year" with the release of a Fleetwood Mac documentary tied to the 50th anniversary of the band's 1977 album "Rumours." "Because I think quite a

few things will reveal themselves," he said. While he dodged a question about a possible tour, Buckingham said "the most important thing" is that the group's surviving members — himself, Nicks, 78, Mick Fleetwood, 79, and John

McVie, 80 — have reconciled and can work together again following what he described as "a very circular healing process for all of us." The former bandmates dated from 1972 to 1978, and split while recording "Rumours." Eric Todisco

A boat overturned off the coast of Liberty Island on Saturday night prompting a rescue effort by the NYPD and Coast Guard, according to sources. Two people, a woman and a child, were pulled from the water after the 10:30 p.m. incident and had to be

hospitalized in critical condition, according to ABC 7. About a dozen other people were safely rescued from the water in New York Harbor. It wasn't clear what caused the maritime incident. Daniel Cody and Larry Celona

Universal/Courtesy Everett Collection (3)

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O 631.288.6244
joel.posner@elliman.com

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Seacrest going super Nova

Page Six

Ian Mohr

imohr@nypost.com

Oli Coleman
ocoleman@nypost.com
Mara Siegler
msiegler@nypost.com
Carlos Greer
cgreer@nypost.com

Collab on 'Deck'

BRAVO'S "Summer House" is setting sail in the Mediterranean for a crossover with fellow fan favorite "Below Deck," bringing together two of the network's biggest reality juggernauts in what insiders say will be one of the buzziest trips of the season. Sources tell us the yacht getaway won't just feature familiar faces **Jesse Solomon, Mia Alario, Lindsay Hubbard, Ciara Miller, Carl Radke** and **Kyle Cooke** — all of whom were spotted filming aboard a luxury vessel Thursday — but we're also told there are additional, as-yet-unannounced cast members joining the voyage, with Bravo keeping their identities tightly under wraps for now.



Flaunt-ing success

CHARLIE Puth, who just performed on NPR's "Tiny Desk Concerts," had an intimate dinner party at the Mulberry in Soho this week, where he was honored by Lucky Brand and Flaunt magazine. The singer-songwriter sat down with guests over bites that included fortune cookies with messages telling attendees to "create your own luck." He then headed to a bouncer-protected corner, where he held court with Flaunt higher-ups before slipping out before 9:30 p.m. Puth (above) also played a free show Thursday at the Z100 Summer Bash at Hudson Yards.

RYAN Seacrest has gone Dutch — just not on the bill. Page Six can exclusively confirm the TV host is getting serious with Dutch model **Maxime Nova**, with multiple insiders telling us their whirlwind romance has quickly evolved into something far more meaningful.

"He is completely besotted with her. And she feels the same about him as well," a source tells us. "They are head over heels."

According to insiders, they have been spending as much time together as their busy schedules allow, and those close to Seacrest say the relationship has progressed rapidly over the past few months.

Sources say the "Wheel of Fortune" host has

been making a concerted effort to prioritize time with Nova. He is also the host of "American Idol," as well as radio shows "On Air With Ryan Seacrest" and "American Top 40."

We're told Seacrest, 51, recently spared no expense treating the 34-year-old model to an extravagant summer escape, flying her by private jet to meet him aboard a luxury yacht in the Ionian Sea.

The couple reportedly rented a 12-person vessel exclusively for themselves so they could enjoy an intimate vacation together, away from the spotlight.

"He just spent an absolute fortune taking her on a romantic holiday for the summer," our

insider says. "They make such a gorgeous-looking couple, and it's become very serious in a short space of time."

In late June, Seacrest and Nova were spotted sharing an alfresco dinner in the South of France, fueling speculation their relationship was heating up.

Nova, who is represented by top international agencies, was previously rumored to have dated **Mohamed Hadid**, the father of supermodels **Gigi** and **Bella Hadid**, after they were pictured enjoying a shopping outing on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills in 2022.

Page Six has reached out to representatives for Seacrest and Nova.



Cardi B busts out the big bling Friday night partying with **Teyana Taylor**. At one point a pal (inset) helped Cardi be her sartorial best.



Goop oozes in UES

GWYNETH Paltrow's New York Goop takeover continues to spread. The wellness brand opened its third Goop Kitchen in the city last Monday, and this time they're not just using a ghost kitchen for takeout. Goop's new Upper East Side location is an actual storefront on East 92nd Street, where diners can walk in, order in person and leave with their meals in hand. Paltrow's booming takeover eatery is inching closer to becoming a sit-down restaurant, Page Six Hollywood previously reported. Sources revealed Goop Kitchen is opening a restaurant around La Brea Avenue in L.A. They're keeping details on the pending "good clean food" eatery close to the vest. A rep for the brand said there's nothing to confirm yet.

We hear

THAT **Julia Haart** launched her Body by Julia ready-to-wear collection at her estate in Miami ... THAT **Eltara Casata** designer **Radmila Lolly** has her unique gowns made from Miami Heat jerseys displayed at the Pérez Art Museum in Miami until Aug. 23.



Tay 'care' package

LEAVE it to **Taylor Swift's** celeb pals to assure the world how much she really cares. "Adults" star **Owen Thiele** and **Este Haim** sang the pop star's praises on an episode of his podcast "In Your Dreams." Haim (above), for one, said Swift is practically her family. "She's a sister. Taylor and I have known each other since 2014. I love her more than anything. She's the best," she said. Thiele described the "Blank Space" singer as "so supportive" about his projects. "'Adults' comes out. I was scared that no one saw it," he said. But Swift did! "She's like, 'That episode where ...' She's so locked in and she just cares," Thiele said. Haim added, "I love that ... my girl watches everything." Well, except for maybe ex-friend **Blake Lively's** "Gossip Girl."

A summer tailored for the girls

STACEY Bendet has gone from grind to gratitude and is feeling hotter than ever. The Alice + Olivia designer, 47, has been spending the summer with her best friend, newly single **Jenny Mollen**, also 47, who's been staying at the fashionista's Hamptons home. Bendet previously told Page Six they were having a "fun girl summer," which she's been chronicling on Instagram with snaps from boat days, spa sessions and glamorous parties. Now Bendet says they're embracing life more than ever. "We are at this point in our 40s where we are so happy with who we are and what we do," the designer told us at Maison Close in Southampton, where she celebrated her Spotlight magazine cover. "We were like, 'You know what? We feel hotter than we did in our 20s.'" She added that she and Mollen, who recently split from actor **Jason Biggs**, have reached a place where they're appreciating the lives they've built. "We've both sort of gotten there. We've had our kids, we're raising our kids. Every day, I love what I do." That doesn't mean Bendet is slowing down. She's also deep in preparations for New York Fashion Week, teasing an "Enchanted"-themed Alice + Olivia show.

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Gimme Shelter

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Harley Ellen Day



WireImage

Martha Hunt aims to sell her ‘model’ home

TOP model **Martha Hunt** (right) is about to list her Tribeca pad on a charming cobbledstone alleyway for \$3.75 million, Gimme Shelter has learned.

And it's sure to make a splash, as the chic spread is in a boutique building with a shared rooftop pool. Plus, the building's location on a cobbledstone alleyway is "like having your own private street," said listing broker **Taylor Middleton** of Douglas Elliman.

"It's hidden, and tucked away from the hustle and bustle of the city,"

Hunt purchased the condo for \$3.45 million in 2017. She's now looking for bigger digs with her love, photographer **Jason McDonald**, and their daughter **Emery**.

The two-bedroom, three-bath residence is



at 5 Franklin Place.

It was reimaged by AD100 designer **Giancarlo Valle** and had its own 2021 close-up in Architectural Digest.

The former Victoria's Secret Angel and top model for designers including Prada and Miu Miu, who was also a former Bulgari ambassador, was also once part of **Taylor Swift's** "girl squad" and was in Swift's 2015 "Bad Blood" music video.

At 1,700 square feet, the loft-like space features three exposures.

"The light is what first drew her here," Middleton said.

There's an open chef's kitchen that anchors the living and dining areas, and custom sage-hued

limewashed bedroom walls.

That large main bedroom suite also features custom built-ins, a walk-in closet, and a separate sitting area with a windowed, spa-like marble bath. Design details include 5-inch plank oak hardwood floors and 9.5-foot ceilings.

Furnishings, as per the AD story, include a vintage sofa by **Mario Bellini** for B&B Italia, and a custom bronze and ceramic dining table and banquette.

Designed by **Eran Chen's** ODA Architects, the new-construction building features curves and a cantilevered upper exterior, with interiors by **Andres Escobar**.

A piece of living history

AN 18th-floor aerie in the Flatiron Building, one of the city's most iconic landmarks, has found a buyer.

The three-bedroom, three-bath residence at 175 Fifth Ave. — now in the midst of a condominium conversion, and one that has been highly successful — was asking \$15.65 million, up from its \$15.5 million ask in September. The deal — marking the latest inside the storied property — was first reported in the Olshan Luxury Market Report, which named it the highest priced contract of the week.

The name of the buyer, along with the final price to be paid, are not yet known.

At 3,020 square feet, the dwelling is one of only three units in the building to feature arched windows.

Inside, there's a large, wedge-shaped great room and a roomy primary bedroom with large walk-in closets and a spa-like bath, along with a marble-countered chef's kitchen.

Design details include white oak

parquet floors and lofty ceilings, along with views of the city skyline and both the rivers.

Exposed structural steel beams have also been incorporated into the design.

The triangular-shaped Beaux-Arts building overlooking Madison Square Park, at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Broadway, gave the Flatiron District its name.

Built in 1902 for George A. Fuller Construction Co., it served as an office building until its last tenant, Macmillan Publishing, vacated in 2019 after a 60-year run.

By 2023, after the owners fell into disagreement, the historic building was auctioned twice. When the first auction winner failed to pay his deposit, a second group led by **Jeffrey Gural's** GFP Real Estate, alongside Sorgente Group and ABS Real Estate Partners, won the second auction with a \$161 million bid. The Brodsky Organization later bought into the owner-

ship group and is now managing the condo conversion.

Sales quietly launched last year, with move-ins anticipated to begin this fall.

To date, at least 15 units are in contract including a \$58.5 million, five-bedroom full-floor residence on the 21st floor.

The 24-story building features large apartments that span up to a grand six bedrooms.

The building, designed by Daniel Burnham and Frederick P. Dinkelberg of D.H. Burnham & Co. in Renaissance Revival style, comes with modern interiors by **William Sofield's** Studio Sofield.

The conversion also restored the building's terra-cotta and limestone facade, as well as the roof's 6-foot-tall cornice. In addition, more than 1,000 windows were replaced by hand.

Amenities include 24-hour doormen, a 60-foot lap pool, a sauna, a billiards room, a lounge with a kitchenette and bike storage.

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Hamas' 'ambush'

MOHAMMED SABER/EPAP/Shutterstock



DUBIOUS: Hamas says it is ready to lay down its arms — but only if Israel withdraws first from the Gaza Strip (pictured).

By GABRIELLE FAHMY

Wants US to force Israeli withdrawal

Hamas demanded Washington pressure Israel to withdraw from the Gaza Strip Saturday — a “strategic ambush” that comes even as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has already insisted the Jewish state would never agree to such a deal unless the terrorists first lay down their weapons.

Under the second phase of the agreement negotiated by President Trump, the Palestinian terrorists inside the Gaza Strip would hand over their arms as the Israeli Defense Forces simultaneously withdraw from the territory and a technocratic government takes over.

The terror group is now claiming it is finally ready to disarm, a feat that could reshape the Middle East after nearly two decades of war and bloodshed.

“Hamas and other factions have confirmed to mediators their readiness to begin implementing the agreement and move to the second phase, provided it receives Israeli approval

and that Israel begins implementing the agreement,” a Hamas official told the Agence France-Presse.

“Hamas is urging the US administration to exert pressure on Israel to compel it to abide by the agreement and move to the second phase.”

But Netanyahu — who is facing a tough re-election campaign this fall and fierce opposition from the far right to the Gaza peace deal — has already said Israel never agreed to withdraw before Hamas is fully disarmed.

In his first public comments on the matter, Netanyahu (inset) said Tuesday the IDF would stay

put until Hamas has laid down all its weapons.

“President Trump thinks — or his team thinks — that they can get Hamas to disarm and demilitarize Gaza,” he said in a video address.

“They sent us a draft. We did not agree to it. It was not our draft. We sent back our comments.”

The draft was the result of separate negotiations between the Trump-controlled Board of Peace and Hamas.

Trump last week hailed as a breakthrough that Hamas had agreed to lay down its arms, with the Board of Peace saying Israel would in tandem carry out a phased withdrawal from



much of Gaza.

But Israeli officials have cast Hamas's response in starkly different terms, warning it is using the diplomatic process to stall and ensure Israel doesn't resume military action.

'Put ball in our court'

“Hamas hasn't abandoned the vision of destroying Israel,” said Brig. Gen. Ofir Mizrahi-Rozen, head of the IDF's Military Intelligence Research Department, according to the Israel Hayom newspaper.

“It is apparent that there is a Hamas effort to put the ball in our court.”

“This is a strategic ambush by Hamas,” added Israel Security Agency chief David Zini.

Under the peace plan, the disarmament and troops withdrawal would be followed by the reconstruction of the enclave.

That has been estimated at \$71.4 billion by the United Nations, European Union and the World Bank in a joint assessment released in April.

News OF THE World®

MALAYSIA

They can take a hike if they don't follow the rules.

After a surge in accidents and search-and-rescue operations due to social media trends, the country is rolling out new rules for hikers, such as the mandatory use of guides at its 189 high-risk locations.

Although hiking is a popular pastime in Malaysia, over half the country is under a tropical forest, causing hikers to lose their way.

AUSTRALIA

The early bird can get a grip on this virus.

Environmentalists are calling for the government's help in curbing the bird flu plaguing Phillip Island's Little penguin population, and asking they come up with a plan to stop potential “mass deaths” of the species.

There are over 40,000 penguins in Phillip Island in Victoria, which is a major tourist attraction. Experts warn if left untreated, the virus could also spread to other animals.

ENGLAND

She's one spry senior.

A 97-year-old Cheltenham resident broke her own Guinness World Record when she went wing-walking — moving along the wings of a biplane in flight — a year after suffering a stroke.

Betty Bromage earned the title of oldest female wing-walker in Cirencester, Gloucestershire.

MEXICO

Did AI ace these exams?

The prestigious National Autonomous University of Mexico administered its admissions exam for the first time online this summer, and its results showed an unusually high number of perfect scores.

Suspicious that AI was used, the school asked 58,000 students to retake it, leaving all 160,000 who took the exam waiting on acceptance.

CANADA

Two First Nations women from Alberta won the Miss Indigenous Canada competition.

Among the 125 contestants who competed, Brooke Metchewais, a Plains Cree woman from the Cold Lake First Nations in Treaty 6, took first place, while Heather Wolf Ear, from Siksika First Nations in Treaty 7, was the runner-up.

The women are judged based on an interview and essay, a cultural presentation, and a scrapbook documenting the work they've done in their communities.

Angela Barbuti, With Wires

Ukr. sinks 12 Vlad ships Tex. cop 'kills 3' in Mex.

Ukraine said Saturday its long-range drones destroyed 12 Russian “shadow fleet” oil tankers over the past week, escalating its campaign against vessels helping Moscow evade oil export sanctions.

The attacks are part of Operation Molochka, which kicked off July 6, and resulted in 134 hits on ships in the Sea of Azov and 84 in the Black Sea, officials told the Kyiv Independent.

The strikes came as Russia

launched a massive overnight barrage of drones and ballistic missiles on Kyiv and the surrounding region, killing four people — including a 3-year-old boy and two of his grandparents — and wounding at least eight others, according to Ukrainian officials.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky pleaded for more sanctions to stop Russian production of ballistic missiles.

Shane Galvin

A Texas police officer allegedly killed three people and critically wounded his ex-partner during a suspected custody battle in Mexico before he was caught trying to flee into the US with his toddler son.

Chad Eberle, a reserve officer for the Santa Anna Police Department, is accused of opening fire at a home in Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico, after he was denied custody of his 3-year-old son on Aug. 4, Mexican newspaper La Razón reported.

Two 44-year-olds, a female and a male, and a 22-year-old female were killed in the shooting, according to the outlet.

Officials did not reveal the relationship the victims had with Eberle.

Eberle, 35, allegedly shot his son's 26-year-old mother in the head during the massacre, critically wounding her before fleeing the home with the kid, according to the outlet. Nicholas McEntyre

'Say' what? Bettor sues Polymarket

A Polymarket bettor who says he correctly predicted President Trump would say "Khamenei" back in March is suing the prediction market giant for \$170,000 in damages because the site claims Trump never said the word.

A few weeks after the war with Iran began Feb. 28, Polymarket asked bettors a simple yes or no question: would Trump say the words "Khamenei" or "Ayatollah" during the week of March 15?

Jesús Manuel Gonzalez Hernandez claims he bought 170,000 "yes" shares for \$300. His payout, had he placed a winning bet, would have been \$170,000.

The suit alleges that while talking to reporters aboard Air Force One that week, Trump said "Khamenei" twice.

But Polymarket concluded that he never said the word, resolved the market "no" and Gonzalez Hernandez was not paid out. *Trista Panagakos*

Consult \$hock in NJ lawsuit

City public schools paid \$224,000 to a consultant being sued by a New Jersey school district for alleged mismanagement and corruption.

Thomas McBryde Jr. served as a superintendent in Big Apple schools from 2014 to 2021 before taking a job as superintendent at Hackensack Public Schools.

He now is being sued by HPS over allegations his mismanagement left his district in a \$17 million hole.

David Spector

Kylie a pink princess

Kylie Jenner celebrates her upcoming 29th birthday on — where else? — Instagram. It's "my pre-bday princess kitty party," Jenner wrote on her Instagram Story Friday, sharing a look at her playful Barbie-inspired pink body-hugging dress with matching feather-embellished stilettos.



kyliejenner/instagram

\$400K 'CLUB' AT P.A. OT fuels bloated pay

By RICH CALDER

Twenty Port Authority workers, including 17 cops, pocketed \$400,000 or more last year as the bistate agency's payroll topped \$1.2 billion, records show.

Eight of the bloated agency's top earners collected more than \$200,000 in overtime pay, records show.

A whopping 323 workers, including 189 PA cops, collected six figures in overtime, helping drive the bi-state agency's 2025 payroll up 5% from the previous year's, according to payroll data provided by the Empire Center for Public Policy.

PA police officers — who protect many of the New York-New Jersey area's tunnels, bridges, airports, rail lines, and bus and shipping terminals — are among the nation's highest paid law-enforcement personnel.

While PA officers' starting salary of \$46,954 is well below what NYPD cops and state troopers pocket, they earn \$131,703 in base pay after 10 years on the job, and routinely pile up massive overtime pay.

Expensive ride

Leading the way last year was Lt. Nicholas Federico, whose base salary of \$180,691 was dwarfed by his \$215,717 in OT. He made \$466,775 for the year, including fringe benefits.

Not far behind were two detective sergeants: Dewan Maharaj, who took in \$448,612, including \$147,937 in overtime; and Robert Zafonte Jr., who made \$448,601, including \$139,193 in OT.

Reginald Bowers, a chief maintenance supervisor, collected the agency's largest overtime haul — \$231,916 — boosting his total compensation to \$421,041.

His combined pay ranked 11th at

PORT AUTHORITY FATCATS

All of the top 5 earners at the 8,300-employee NY/NJ agency are cops

Name	OT Pay	Total Pay*
Lt. Nicholas Federico	\$215,717	\$466,775
Sgt. Dewan Maharaj	\$147,937	\$448,612
Sgt. Robert Zafonte Jr.	\$139,193	\$448,601
Lt. Jaime Sandoz	\$211,481	\$443,452
Sgt. William Kruesi	\$143,111	\$442,381

*Can include payments for longevity, shift-differential, etc.

SOURCE: Empire Center for Public Policy

the debt-ridden authority, which also oversees the World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan.

None of them could be reached for comment.

Richard Cotton — the PA's executive director last year before retiring in January — saw his \$327,918 salary surpassed by 94 underlings.

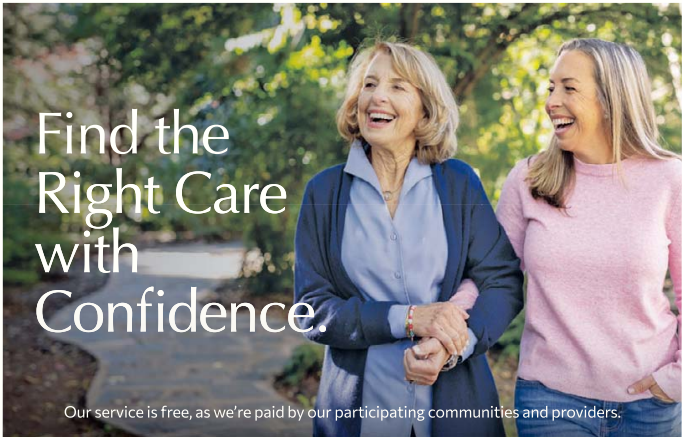
"Taxpayers are getting fleeced twice: first, paying for these high wages and overtime payments, and second, paying for pensions inflated by these high wages and overtime payments," said Zilvinas Silenas, president of Empire Center, which obtained the data through a Freedom of Information Law request.

The rising payroll costs could also lead to higher fees and tolls, Silenas added.

The PA in January raised its bridge and tunnel tolls by 3% while phasing out off-peak discounts to EZ Pass users.

In May, it hiked PATH train fares by a quarter, to \$3.25, and additional 25-cent hikes are set over the next three years to pay for infrastructure improvements.

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HS trainer in 'sex' arrest

By JEANNE ERICKSON

A female high-school athletic trainer allegedly lured a student into a sick relationship — and has been busted on felony charges, officials said.

Christina G. Payton, 27, allegedly had an “inappropriate relationship” with a pupil at the Indian Creek HS in Shabbona Ill., the Lee County Sheriff’s Office said in a statement.

Exactly what Payton (inset) did was not disclosed by officials, but she was hit with felony and misdemeanor charges of distributing harmful material to a minor, the office said.

The relationship was first reported to cops June 10, leading to an in-

vestigation by Lee County detectives that prompted Payton to turn herself in Wednesday, officials said.

Indian Creek School District Superintendent Chad Willis told the Shaw Local news outlet that the charges were “deeply concerning and disappointing.”

Payton, of Creston, Ill., was released without bail in accordance with a 2021 state criminal-justice reform law that means defendants no longer have to pay money to be released while awaiting trial.

Payton and the Lee County Sheriff’s Office did not immediately return The Post’s calls for comment.

jerickson@nypost.com



Stabbing at co-op on UES

A 54-year-old woman was stabbed and left hospitalized in an attack by a 66-year-old woman at a ritzy co-op apartment building on the Upper East Side on Saturday, according to sources.

The brazen attack reportedly happened at 210 E. 73rd St., which sits between Second and Third Avenues in the upscale nabe.

One-bedroom units in the building can go for as much as \$700,000, according to StreetEasy data.

It’s wasn’t clear what prompted the violence, but the 54-year-old was stabbed in the stomach and taken by first responders to Weill Cornell hospital in stable condition, according to police.

The person of interest, a 66-year-old woman, was taken into custody.

The investigation was ongoing. Marie Pohl and Daniel Cody

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Vic report suggests 'tamper'

Yacht-slay aftermath

By SHANE GALVIN

Hamptons fashion entrepreneur Martha Nolan-O'Slatarra was cold to the touch and turning purple, with her mouth, chest and back of her head covered in blood, when medics found her aboard a boat in Montauk, according to documents The Post obtained on the one-year anniversary of her death.

The Montauk Fire Department's patient-care record for the Irish-born 33-year-old founder of East x East also noted purpling on her lips and under her nailbeds as well as blood on the floor.

"Boat was quite warm but [patient] was cool to the touch with nail beds that were purple with slight purpling around lips," a note from the EMT report read.

Dried blood on body

The body "had dried blood in oral, head and chest area. No active bleeding observed or obvious sources of trauma. First arriving EMT noted blood potentially from the back of head area when EMT positioned head to open airway and begin" resuscitation efforts and administer oxygen, the report said.

The report notes an "additional male" was on the scene at the time of the cardiac arrest. That person, not identified in the report, told EMTs that he was in bed with Nolan-O'Slatarra (upper inset) and called 911 when he was unable to wake her up, the report stated.

Boat owner Chris Durnan (lower inset) is the only person to have been previously confirmed as being on



the scene and last seeing her alive.

He was reportedly spotted running for help down the Montauk Yacht Club dock completely nude at roughly midnight on Aug. 5, 2025. "Do something!" the naked man screamed, good Samaritans later told The Post.

Durnan's lawyers told New York magazine that he stripped down naked because he was soaked in Nolan-O'Slatarra's

vomit. EMTs did not note any vomit in their report.

An autopsy commissioned by Nolan-O'Slatarra's family revealed that only trace amounts of cocaine were found in her system, according to her family's lawyer.

A crime scene expert who reviewed the report found the its details concerning.

"This thing stinks," said Patrick Zirpoli, a private investigator and retired Pennsylvania State Police corporal with more than two decades of experience.

Zirpoli, who is not connected to this case, said the scene could have been staged "to make it seem like something else."

Michael Bowe — a lawyer for Nolan-O'Slatarra's family, who live in County Carlow, Ireland — also claimed Durnan staged the scene.

"Law enforcement informed the family they believed the scene had been cleaned," Bowe said.

Nolan-O'Slatarra's family has filed a \$50 million lawsuit in Manhattan Civil Court on Tuesday, alleging that Durnan caused her death through assault and gross negligence.

Lawyers for Durnan could not be reached.

'I know he's still got my back'

By SARAH JONES and JEANETTE SETTEMBRE

AS Ariana Grande prepares to take a step back from performing and public life amidst concerns about her health, insiders say her rekindled romance with Ricky Alvarez is a bright spot during a challenging time.

"He's been super supportive of her. He's been showing up on her tour," said a source close to Grande, 33, whose gaunt appearance in her "Petal" video has drawn widespread concern. "They've known each other for a long time and they found their way back to each other."

Alvarez, 35, first joined Grande's team in 2014 as one of her backup dancers when she launched her hit single "Problem" at the 2014 Radio Disney Music Awards.

The pop star was just 20 years old at the time.

A year later, in 2015, Alvarez was brought on as a dancer for Grande's Hon-eymoon tour.

The pair shared a kiss on stage while Grande was singing Madonna's "Vogue" at a concert during Pride month in New York that June.

The following month, the couple unintentionally hard-launched their relationship on the Fourth of July weekend when a video of Grande appearing to lick a donut at a Los Angeles shop went viral.

While the strange clip eclipsed talk of their private life, it was the first time their relationship was confirmed publicly, with Grande kissing Alvarez inside the storefront.

After about a year together, the pair fizzled out.

"They were both in very different places in their lives," a second source close to Alvarez told The Post.

"They were younger, constantly on the road and trying to

figure out who they were individually, so the timing just wasn't right," the source added. "There was never any bad blood between them, though, and they always cared about each other."

Terrible tragedy

"It wasn't the right time for them," a source close to the couple told The Post. "Her career was taking off. They couldn't find time for each other. They didn't get a chance to see where things could go."

In the decade that followed, Grande has been through an enormous amount of both professional and personal turmoil.



REUNITED: After a decade apart, Ariana Grande and Ricky Alvarez (above in July) recently confirmed they are dating again.

In May 2017, a suicide bombing at one of her concerts in Manchester, England, killed 22 people and injured hundreds. The singer was devastated.

"Broken. from the bottom of my heart, i am so so sorry. i don't have words," she wrote on social media just after.

She spoke more about her grief, PTSD and depression in the wake of the horrific attack on a Hollywood Reporter "Awards Chatter" podcast last year, saying, "I was doing so much therapy."

Love and loss

More tragedy followed. In the fall of 2018, rapper Mac Miller, a long-time friend Grande had dated for a couple of years, died from an accidental overdose.

"I really can't wrap my head around it," she wrote on Instagram at the time. "i'm so sad i don't know what to do. you were my dearest friend. for so long. above anything else."

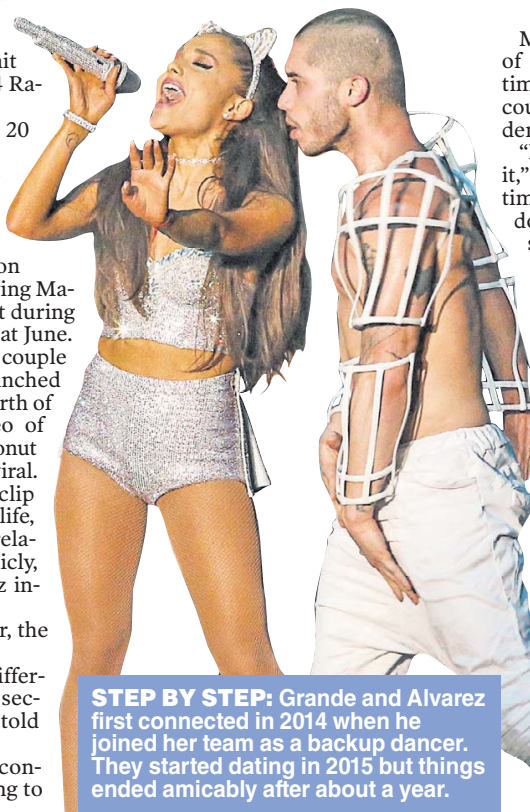
"i'm so sorry i couldn't fix or take your pain away. i really wanted to. the kindest, sweetest soul with demons he never deserved. i hope you're okay now. rest."

That same year, Grande got engaged to Pete Davidson after a whirlwind courtship that ultimately imploded.

Then came a two-year marriage to real estate broker Dalton Gomez, followed by a highly publicized relationship with her "Wicked" co-star Ethan Slater — and chatter that she was to blame for the dissolution of his marriage.

She and Slater quietly split this past June, after three years of dating.

"This wasn't a decision they took lightly but realized they were better off



STEP BY STEP: Grande and Alvarez first connected in 2014 when he joined her team as a backup dancer. They started dating in 2015 but things ended amicably after about a year.

IN IT TOGETHER: Ariana Grande recently rekindled her relationship with Ricky Alvarez, and insiders say he's been a beacon of support as she takes a step back amidst concerns about her gaunt appearance (below right).

friends than in a committed relationship," a source told Page Six in June. Meanwhile, starring in "Wicked," while a dream role, also exacted a heavy toll on Grande.

"These films were a tremendous undertaking in every way for all of us ... mentally, physically, emotionally ... floating home sleepily at the end of every work day feeling like 'husks', we would always say," the star wrote on Instagram in October 2025, ahead of the film's release.

"'Wicked' was an incredible experience, but it also demanded so much of her," the source close to Grande added. "Then she went straight into new music and touring. She hasn't really given herself much time to slow down."

Indeed, Grande's current struggles have been mounting for quite a while.

"People forget just how much Ariana has carried over the years," the source noted.

"Between Manchester, losing Mac, everything that followed in her personal life, and then throwing herself into work for years, she's been through so much. None of those experiences simply disappear just because time passes."

A shoulder to lean on

Thankfully, Alvarez seems to offer a welcome respite from it all.

"Ricky has been someone she feels really comfortable with. He's not trying to solve all of her problems," the source said. "He's just there for her. He's supportive, encouraging and reminds her she doesn't have to carry everything by herself."

On her current tour, Grande has mentioned her new beau multiple times on amended versions of her hit, "Thank U, Next."

On June 24 at her concert in Austin, Texas, she sang, "Wrote some songs about Ricky / And they still kinda slap."

Two nights later, at another show, Alvarez appeared to be dancing in the VIP section and Grande sang, "Wrote some songs about Ricky / I know he's still got my back."

The Post has reached out to Grande.

Amidst challenging times, Ariana Grande finds love and support in her back-on beau Ricky Alvarez



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TINDER RAPE VIC'S FEAR

Serial fiend up for parole

By SONYA GUGLIARA

A convicted serial rapist who stalked his prey on Tinder could walk free this October after serving less than a year in prison — and one of his victims is terrified after her 11-year battle to lock him up.

"The Office" actress Shira Scott Astrof is one of the at least half a dozen women in Los Angeles that Matthew Werner has been accused of catfishing on dating apps and brutally sexually assaulting.

Werner, 49, is up for parole in October, only nine months after being sentenced to four years in prison, according to on-line records.

"It's like a never-ending battle, and it shouldn't be this hard," Astrof told The Post. "I'm a sitting target. He knows everything about me, he knows where I live."

Met on app

Astrof, whose credits include "Criminal Minds," met Werner, who's originally from Massachusetts, on the online dating app in 2015, except he was masquerading as Sebastian Larsson, a soccer star from Sweden.



MATTHEW WERNER
Up for parole in October.

On the day of their scheduled date, Astrof said she wasn't feeling well and Werner offered to bring soup to her apartment.

She said he was nice at first, but then brazenly revealed he brought cocaine and allegedly did a line in front of her.

Then he attacked her from behind, Astrof recalled.

He choked her and dislocated her shoulder during the horrific assault — leaving her on the floor as he walked out.

"He's a coward that has to attack you when your back is turned," Astrof said. "He has no soul."

She reported the attack to police immediately and

was rushed to the hospital.

Astrof said that in the years to come she was told by Los Angeles County officials that her case wasn't strong enough on its own and that she'd need another one of his victims to come forward to testify alongside her.

Police eventually tied Werner to at least a half a dozen rapes across Los Angeles County, according to news reports at the time.

Arrested in 2023

He was finally arrested in 2023 in Las Vegas and charged with three counts of sexual assault against two women, including Astrof.

The case never went to trial. Instead, Werner was offered a sweet plea deal in 2023 — no contest to one count of felony assault and one misdemeanor count of sexual battery. He was given probation, the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office said, and had to register as a sex offender.

He was finally sentenced to four years in prison in February after a judge ruled he had violated his probation for a third time.

Jill gives up on 'Madam Prez'

Former first lady Jill Biden said Wednesday she doubted she would see a female president in her lifetime, adding she was sure it was going to be former Vice President Kamala Harris.

During a conversation on Kelly Ripa's "Let's Talk Off Camera" podcast, Ripa asked the former first lady if she felt they would see a female president in their lifetimes.

"In my lifetime? Well, I'm 75. So, you know, I feel like probably not in my lifetime, Kelly, but maybe in yours,"

she responded.

Biden said she was confident Harris would be the first female president.

"But I really did think last time that Kamala was going to win. I mean, I was out on the campaign trail for her. I saw the excitement," Biden said.

"I saw the crowds. I saw, you know, at the convention. I mean, I saw all the energy and I thought, 'Finally, we're going to have a woman president.'"

Patrice Onwuka, the VP of economic policy at Independent Women, told Fox

News Digital in a statement that the ex-first lady's comments were a slap in the face.

"Jill Biden's comments about never expecting to see a female president is a slap to the bench of female Democrats that have 2028 aspirations, like AOC and Gretchen Whitmer," Onwuka said.

"The supposed party of women can't even convince the former first lady of its prospects to elect a woman at the top of the ticket."

Hanna Panreck, Fox News

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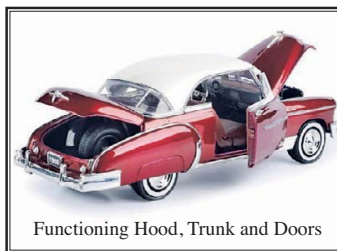
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Bulletproof gran

Bx. woman, 87, survives shoot



TOUGH: Elticeal Grant, 87, was walking on a Bronx street July 31 when she was hit by a stray bullet allegedly shot from a trio of teens who were later arrested.

By TINA MOORE
and NICK LABBAT

She's one tough granny.

An 87-year-old Bronx woman who was shot in the neck during a broad-daylight burst of gunfire by a trio of armed teens said she had no idea she'd been hit until a stranger pointed out the blood pouring down her neck.

"I just go through this gate, and I was standing," Elticeal Grant told The Post on Thursday from her home behind a metal gate in Wakefield. "Someone said to me 'You're bleeding, you get shot.'"

Then, a bystander ran up to her with paper towels "and start to sop up the blood, sop up the blood, sop of the blood," she said, repeating the phrase for dramatic emphasis.

"I was bleeding so much," said Grant. "That's all I know."

Grant was hit by a stray bullet at East 224th Street and Barnes Avenue around 3:50 p.m. on July 31, according to police. An 18-year-old

man was also struck in the hip and survived.

Three 16-year-olds were arrested — two of whom were charged with attempted murder and weapons possession, said police. The third faces only a charge of weapons possession.

Grant didn't remember seeing or hearing anyone firing a gun.

"I was walking along the road," she said. "The only thing I saw was cars parked in the road. I didn't see anyone."

'It hurts'

She said she became cold and started shivering after she was hit, as the bullet left a wound beneath her earlobe.

"It's crazy that she was shot," said her niece Keisha McCrea, adding that her aunt has "at least

10" grandchildren and some great-grandchildren.

Her aunt is "a nice lady" who moved to the neighborhood 20 years ago from the island of Jamaica, she said.

"Nothing like that ever happened to her there," she said. "It hurts to see it happen here."

Grant's home nurse said the shooters should be locked up regardless of the state's Raise the Age Law, which lifted the age of criminal responsibility from 16 to 18 and has led to rising youth gun violence.

"If you're out here shooting, you should just be in jail," said the nurse, who identified herself as Mary Jane. "Or, like, they have those ... juvenile programs. They should at least go there. Not home, though."

The city's two juvenile deten-

tion centers — Horizon in The Bronx and Crossroads in Brooklyn — have faced severe overcrowding and are often operating at or above maximum capacity, according to city data online.

She also said the teens may have been working for drug dealers in the area.

"There's older people ... like the big drug dealers ... that are literally using the young teenage boys because they know that they have that advantage," she said. "They're just using them."

Shooting victims in The Bronx's 47th Precinct have increased 18% to 26 so far this year compared to the 22 at this point last year, according to NYPD data. The number of shooting victims citywide has decreased by 5% to 474 from 491, the data show.

tmoore@nypost.com

Shootings drop due to 'zone strategy'

The record-low number of shootings in July was the most impressive statistic veteran NYPD Chief of Department Michael LiPetri has seen in his 33 years on the job, he told The Post.

"I told the police commissioner I think July was the most impressive shooting stat ... the NYPD has had [in] ... the CompStat era," he recalled Thursday.

There were 57 shootings, a 24% drop from the 75 in July 2025, although police dealt with major events across the city.

The number of shootings in a July hasn't been lower anytime in recent history, said LiPetri, who joined the force around the time that CompStat, a tool for tracking crime, was developed in 1994.

He credited the NYPD's strong focus on the department's 73 violence-reduction zones despite the "massive logistical demands" of the Sail250 event and Fourth of July celebrations, the FIFA World Cup, and the Knicks' NBA championship win and ticker-tape parade. The zones were created to focus on areas around "crime clusters" even if they cross precinct boundaries.

"They [officers] stayed in those zones seven days a week at the right times, even when we had everything else going on," LiPetri continued.

The strategy allowed detectives and the Gun Violence Suppression Division to "continue their work unabated," he said. Tina Moore



Leonardo Munoz for NY Post

Dunce demand for sex on 2nd date goes viral

A young man's pathetic voice message demanding sex on the second date — or else — has gone viral, with millions of women questioning the state of Gen Z dating.

Kelly Culty, 26, shared the audio of the man's self-absorbed rant on TikTok late June, explaining the re-

cording was sent to her friend.

"I had a good time tonight. I definitely think you are lovely," the man said. "If we're gonna go to your place on Thursday, I mean I am looking to have that physical intimacy to see if I am sexually compatible with you.

"So if I'm gonna come over, I would be hoping to like, hook up, have sex, have a good time ... for my own sake," he continued.

He acknowledged that his date was hesitant about sleeping with him while barely knowing him.

"My thing is, what would

be the point of me coming over then if we're not gonna hookup and cuddle and be intimate with each other?"

He said that it's "fine" if she isn't on the same page as him, but then they should just call it off.

"First date, it's fine, we want to get to know each

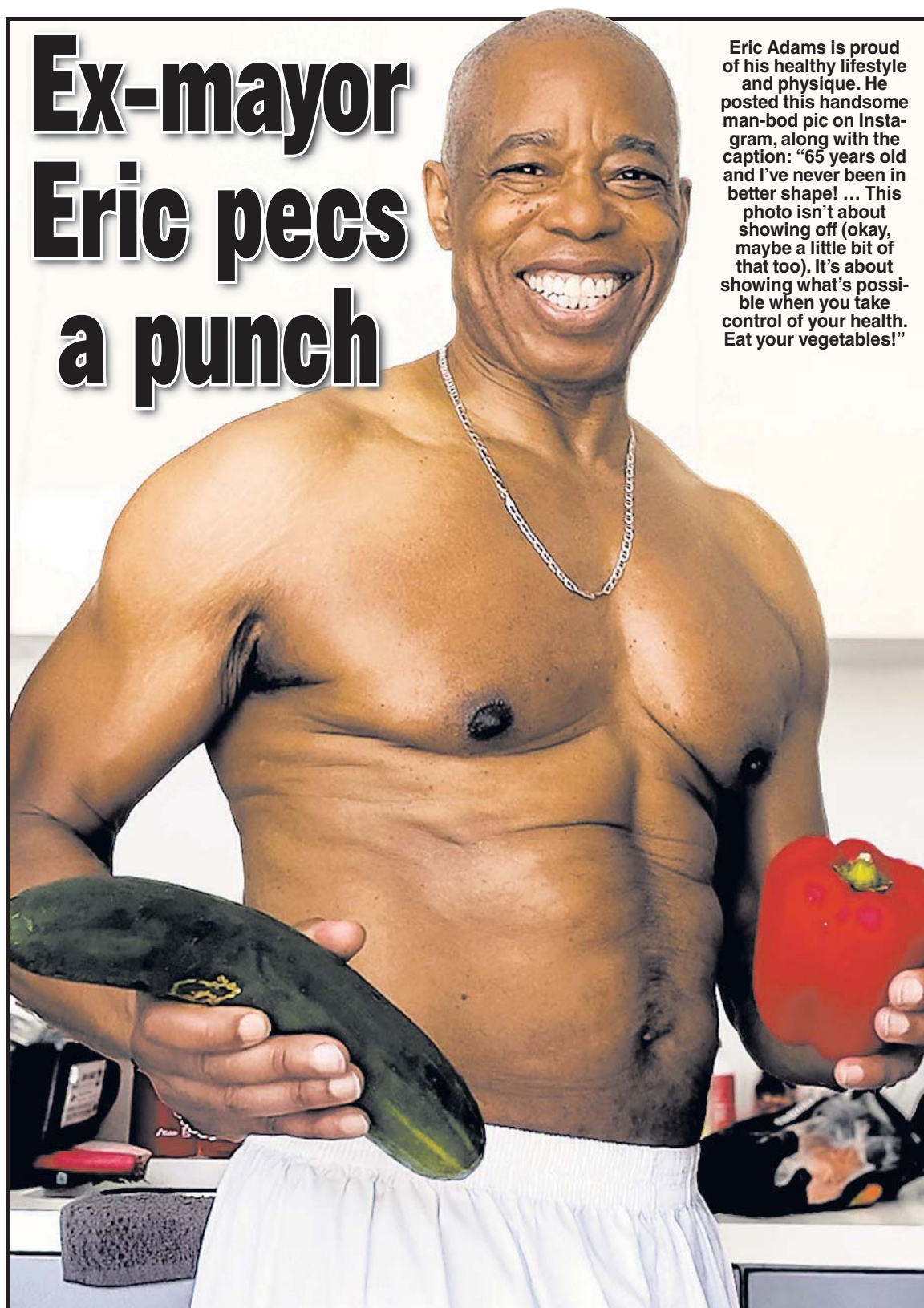
other, I'm all about that. But I am looking to see if that physical aspect is there and I don't want to continue seeing someone if I don't know if that's there or not," he said.

"Like genuinely what possessed him to send this #thatsmywhy," she wrote.

The video garnered 4 million views and sparked an uproar among women who could hardly believe his behavior — amid a dating scene where about 30% of young adults are actively looking for dates, an Institute of Family Studies report found. Sonya Gugliara

Ex-mayor Eric pecs a punch

Eric Adams is proud of his healthy lifestyle and physique. He posted this handsome man-bod pic on Instagram, along with the caption: "65 years old and I've never been in better shape! ... This photo isn't about showing off (okay, maybe a little bit of that too). It's about showing what's possible when you take control of your health. Eat your vegetables!"



Horrific Fla. dad in 'kitten slay'

A 48-year-old Florida man was arrested and charged with animal cruelty after he allegedly killed two kittens and tried to drown another in a twisted punishment for his daughter.

The Lee County Sheriff's Office said deputies visited

the home of David Charette Jr. on Wednesday after receiving a 911 call that he was attempting to drown and beat his 14-year-old daughter's 2-month-old kitten.

Police body camera video showed one of the deputies holding the kitten, named

Luna, as Charette tried to defend his actions.

"Cat's in perfectly healthy condition," he could be heard saying in the video, taken outside of his home.

But Charette's daughter told deputies that Charette assaulted the kitten with a

bottle of nail polish and placed her inside a clothes dryer on Aug. 1, according to CBS affiliate WINK.

Witnesses reportedly told deputies that Charette had a habit of abusing and killing the family pets to punish his daughter. *Adry Torres*

BITTER 'CLUB' FIGHT Suits fly at bar

By SONYA GUGLIARA,
JOYCE COHEN
and NICK LABBAT

A celebrity-magnet Tribeca social club claims a former Merck exec and other neighbors are scheming to get it shut down by filing "baseless" complaints against it.

Maxwell Social Club — where it costs \$12K to join and stars such as Reese Witherspoon, Brooklyn Beckham, David Letterman, Blake Lively and Julia Fox have gone to unwind — alleges in a new lawsuit that party-poopers neighbors have lodged dozens of complaints with the city for years because they can't tolerate the occasional noise.

Owners Kyle Channing-Pearce and David Litwak claim the alleged campaign has already cost them millions of dollars in fines, legal fees and lost business, according to court documents.

Former Merck executive vice president Roger Perlmutter and his wife Joan Kreiss have been warring with their neighbor since it opened in 2023, rattling them out to the city and the co-op board, the suit contends.

But the co-op board — where Perlmutter serves as a member — has been refusing to approve repair requests made by the club for 17 months, according to court papers.

"The result was a self-enforcing scheme," the club claimed in the lawsuit.

Kreiss allegedly complained about issues related to "cooking and ductwork" at Maxwell. But the board shot down the club's pro-

posal for ductwork repairs in October 2024, according to the July 19 complaint filed in Manhattan Supreme Court.

She also allegedly made several efforts to force Maxwell (pictured) to host exclusively quiet events, including suggesting to the board that Maxwell could host "meditation sessions."

Neighbors insist that the club is the bad actor.

Maxwell had originally presented itself as a quiet, intimate venue, but the reality was the opposite, according to a lawsuit the co-op filed against the club for disturbing the neighborhood.

The co-op filed the suit in Manhattan Supreme Court in

October 2025, seeking at least \$1.5 million in damages.

The board also demanded to have Maxwell's lease voided and to bar it from staying open past 10 p.m., according to court papers.

The co-op's legal complaint that the business is an "ongoing private nuisance" includes photos showing throngs of people outside, piles of trash and a person vomiting onto the street.

The court ordered that the club undergo soundproofing in December 2025, Maxwell said it submitted two plans to soundproof to the co-op in 2024, but the board did not "meaningfully" respond, court papers said.

Maxwell also sued a resident named Lucy Flieger on July 19 for complaining and trying to "obstruct and damage" its operations.

Kreiss, Perlmutter, Flieger and Maxwell Social's attorney did not immediately return requests for comment.



BRAIN ‘CELL’ PROBLEM

By SONYA GUGLIARA

‘Jew hater’ rage at tower



LinkedIn / Austin Franco

He’s losing his connection with reality!
Days after getting booted from his family’s \$1.75 million Virginia mansion, the Cornell University student who declared he’s “not interested in working for a Jew” is losing his mind over a new enemy: a 5G cell tower.
In a bizarre Aug. 2 rant on X, Austin Franco (right) claimed a mysterious 5G box outside the window of his new upstate Ithaca pad is blasting harmful radiation right into his brain.
“My head has been ringing for the past hour and I have a massive headache,” Franco, 19, whined in the midnight post.
“The ping on this is already 10x the normal limit and went almost 500x at one point.”
The rising junior then asked if anyone in the area had a room to spare for him to crash in, because he “won’t be staying here much longer.”
“Will just have to eat the cost. And figure out something in the meantime. I guess that’s what happens when [you] can’t test these

places out ahead of time.”
Franco launched a GiveSendGo donation page on July 29, begging for cash after he announced that his parents evicted him from their home due to his “repugnant” views.
He’s already raised over \$10,000 from his twisted supporters — on top of the roughly \$26,000 he’s raked in from a separate fundraiser titled, “Fund Austin Franco after Jewish doxxing,” created by far-right English YouTuber Miles Routledge.
“Our oppression as free white men and women calling it out for

what it is ends now. His parents are too stupid to see that he is right! We are being attacked,” wrote one donor, who gifted Franco \$100.
Strange bedfellows
Lee Whitnum — the 2018 Connecticut Democratic gubernatorial candidate who was dragged off stage and arrested for crashing a forum she wasn’t invited to — also forked over \$100 for Franco.
Whitnum, an outspoken anti-Zionist, said she related to Franco because she was slammed as an-

tisemitic by a former Stamford mayor.
“And, FYI you have every right to work for whom you want.”
Since delivering the antisemitic message to Vryfid’s Jewish co-founders Gabe and Aiden Einhorn via job board site Handshake in June, Franco has embraced being a hater.
Franco’s parents previously told The Post that their son has fallen victim to “extremist online content,” and that his sick beliefs are entirely his own.
Experts agreed.
“The internet can absolutely speed up radicalization. If you’re surrounded day after day by people telling you your anger is righteous and your enemies deserve contempt, your view of what’s normal starts to shift and warp,” psychotherapist Jonathan Alpert, author of “Therapy Nation,” told The Post.
“But we also shouldn’t let ‘the algorithm made me do it’ become the new version of ‘the devil made me do it.’”
Franco did not return a request for comment.
sugliara@nypost.com

Vet, 78, slain by ‘clown’

A Navy veteran who was stabbed to death allegedly by a teen in a clown costume was identified by his hospital bracelet, his heartbroken family told a local outlet.
The relatives of 78-year-old John Wesley Allen Sr. of East St. Louis, Ill., told KSDK that he had not been feeling well and went to a VA hospital for testing before heading to his sister’s house on Aug. 3.
But before he could get there, he was allegedly fatally stabbed by a 15-year-old in a clown costume at a bus stop, investigators said.
His family told the station Allen was identified by the hospital bracelet that was still on his wrist.
Allen’s family believes he was heading for a surprise visit to his oldest sister, Delores Fowler.
The teen was charged with first-degree murder Aug. 6.
Jeanne Erickson

Post Weather Report

Sunday

Today: Sunshine and hot; less humid in the p.m.. High 87 to 93.
Tonight: Clear. Low 70 to 76.

Monday

Tomorrow: Hazy sun and hot. High 88 to 94.
Tomorrow night: Partly cloudy. Low 71 to 77.

Tuesday

A t-storm. High 86 to 92.
Evening Partly cloudy. Low 70 to 76.

Wednesday

Inc. clouds. High 81 to 87.
Evening A t-storm or two. Low 68 to 74.

Almanac
YESTERDAY’S CONDITIONS AT CENTRAL PARK THROUGH 12PM
Temperature
High: 82, Low: 71, Mean: 77
Departure from Normal
Yesterday: -1 degrees
Precipitation
Yesterday: 0.00", Month: 3.14", Year: 25.85", Normal year to date: 29.58"
Cooling Degree days yesterday.....12
Total for the month (normal).....107 (97)
Total since Jan. 1 (normal).....867 (798)
Last year to date.....855
Heat Index (at noon yest.).....88
UV Index (for Sun.).....9 (Very High)
Humidity (at noon).....74%
AIR QUALITY
Pollen: Low Predominant pollen: Weeds, Grasses
AQI rating: (for Sun.).....Moderate

Forecast data is current as of 12 p.m. yesterday. Temperatures are today’s highs and tonight’s lows.

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, r-rain, t-thunderstorms, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice

Sun and Moon
Sunrise today 6:00 a.m.
Sunset tonight 8:02 p.m.
Moonrise today 1:49 a.m.
Moonset today 6:05 p.m.

New First Full Last
Aug 12 Aug 19 Aug 28 Sep 4

Sunday, August 9, 2026

Shown are areas of precipitation and high temperatures for the day.

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New York Tides

	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
High Tide for Coney Island	5:04a	5:33p	6:11a	6:35p
Fire Island	5:04a	5:51p	6:04a	6:47p
Hempstead	9:04a	9:24p	10:11a	10:28p
Huntington	8:51a	9:14p	9:56a	10:16p
Jones Inlet	4:48a	5:17p	5:55a	6:19p
Montauk Point	6:13a	6:55p	7:11a	7:49p
Port Washington	9:11a	9:30p	10:19a	10:35p
Sandy Hook	5:08a	5:37p	6:15a	6:39p

Regional cities

	TODAY	TOMORROW
Albany	84/60/pc	84/69/t
Danbury	90/62/s	89/69/pc
Glens Falls	86/57/c	80/65/t
Gr Barrington	85/59/pc	86/65/pc
Kingston	90/61/pc	90/68/pc
Liberty	84/59/pc	84/66/t
Monticello	84/55/pc	83/63/t
Newburgh	91/63/s	89/70/pc
Poughkeepsie	90/62/s	90/69/pc
Saratoga Springs	86/58/pc	85/68/t
Stroudsburg	90/63/s	88/69/pc
Torrington	88/61/s	89/68/pc
Syracuse	83/65/pc	82/69/t

World cities

	TODAY	TOMORROW
Athens	96/80/s	94/81/s
Baghdad	116/89/s	117/90/s
Beijing	89/67/s	91/76/s
Berlin	89/65/s	84/55/c
Cairo	96/79/pc	99/80/pc
Dublin	69/49/sh	67/53/c
Geneva	93/67/c	94/65/t
Hong Kong	99/86/t	97/85/pc
Jerusalem	88/71/s	91/71/s
Kabul	91/70/pc	94/69/pc
London	90/61/s	83/60/pc
Madrid	97/70/s	98/69/s
Mexico City	74/57/sh	75/58/r
Montreal	82/67/pc	79/66/t
Moscow	72/52/r	76/57/s
Paris	93/65/pc	91/64/s
Rio de Janeiro	85/72/pc	75/67/r
Rome	95/72/s	94/70/s
Sydney	62/56/r	65/57/pc
Tokyo	93/76/t	89/72/t

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THE GUARDIAN OF NEW YORK AWARD

HONORING CARDINAL TIMOTHY DOLAN WITH THE GUARDIAN OF NEW YORK AWARD FOR 16 YEARS OF SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AND STEADFAST DEVOTION TO THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK



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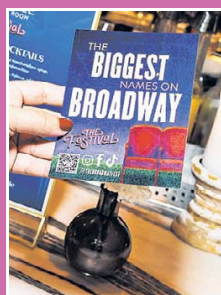
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OPINIONS
& IDEAS

POSTSCRIPT

A crazy plan
for Broadway
Woodstock
P. 40-41



YouTube/St Mary's University, London, Zuma Press

JASON'S GOLDEN FLEECE

We should thank mythomaniac
Dr. Arday for giving us a
101 on how our institutions
destroyed themselves

Jason Arday,
Cambridge's youngest
Black professor — who
claimed he ran a near-
world record on a
fractured leg — has
resigned from
Cambridge over
plagiarism
accusations.



CAMBRIDGE University is England's second-best university, but it's now bottom of the class. As the case of Jason Arday confirms, no one does dumb like the smart people.

In 2023, Cambridge made Arday a professor. He became the professorial chair of sociology and education.



DOMINIC GREEN

These fields produce politicized gibberish and call it scientific research.

Arday allegedly went above and beyond inventing results to fit the ideology. He invented himself. And Cambridge, the place that split the atom, discovered the

structure of DNA and formulated the rules of soccer, played along.

The topic for today's class is that modern classic: "How Our Institutions Destroyed Their Credibility."

When American universities caught the cold of Black Lives Matter in 2020, Britain's leftie academics sneezed. Cambridge had fewer than a half dozen black professors. England's finest minds realized that they had done a "structural racism."

Enter Jason Arday. The son of Ghanaian immigrants. An autistic, epileptic and dyslexic. Arday could not read or write until he was 18. But in 2021 he was already teaching at Glasgow University. His specialty was detecting bat squeaks of racism in education policy.

Cambridge U. touted the 37-year-old as the "youngest Black person ever appointed to a professorship at Cambridge." Arday wasn't just a DEI redeemer and a balm for white liberal guilt. When he wasn't purging racism from schools, he was a world-class endurance runner.

He claimed that he ran 30 marathons in 35 days, nine of them with a fractured leg that had swollen to twice its normal size. He covered 600 of these miles in only six days. Despite his fractured leg, he was within trotting distance of the men's world record, 650 miles in six days. He also claimed he raised more than £5 million for charities.

These feats beggar belief. His biography is full of similarly absurd accolades.

The media rushed to acclaim Arday. Universities competed to employ him and posted his inspirational biography on their websites. Simon & Schuster purchased his memoir, "Great and Unfortunate Things," which — at least for now — comes out Tuesday.

In 2025, Arday said, a masked racist threatened him with a knife. He said a severed pig's head was dumped on his parent's doorstep.

Arday has struggled to sally forth evidence for any of these great and unfortunate claims, athletic or criminal. Many of his other most impressive achievements seem to be crumbling under similar scrutiny.

As the saying goes, "Some ideas are so stupid that only intellectuals believe them."

Arday was an obvious fantasist, a Walter Mitty on the River Cam.

When a researcher named Nathan Cofnas ran Arday's 2015 doctoral dissertation through plagiarism detection software, he found that Arday's thesis appears to have lifted more than 100 passages from Paula Zwodiak-Myers' 2009 thesis. Some suspect he faked his research too.

His backers took his stories and research at face value. They saw only the color of his skin and his political potential.

When the lefty newspaper The Guardian asked him about his claims, Arday said, "To be honest with you, I thought you'd just believe me."

We know why. Cambridge initially called criticism of Arday's scholarship "a vile smear campaign." Arday called it "racially motivated." An open letter claimed that "rightwing newspapers" were attempting to "undermine Black people who hold positions of influence."

Finally, when the stream of evidence became impossible to ignore on Wednesday, Cambridge announced it would open an investigation into their scholar.

The same day, he resigned. Arday supplied the fakery, but the universities and media created the demand for it. Arday is not one bad apple in an otherwise sweet barrel. No, the whole thing is rotten, through and through.

Top academics supervised Arday's research and his thesis. They wrote

his references and hired him. They applauded his talks and published him.

They should be punished too for failing to do even a modicum of due diligence. And they should be made to admit that they put politics above academics.

It's bad enough that academics strike radical postures on the ramparts of the ivory tower.

It's worse when they do the same in public — for instance, when the American Association of University Professors endorses a union hack such as Abdul El-Sayed in Michigan's Democratic Senate primary.

Social-science research drives government policy.

The problem is, the research is as true as an Arday anecdote.

The SCORE project, an international study of 3,900 social science papers, recently published its findings.

When SCORE tested the findings in education papers, it was only able to "approximately reproduce" half of their results.

The other half could not be reproduced at all.

None of the results could be "precisely reproduced."

Hence, America's collapsing literacy rates, created by the kind of people who believed Jason Arday.

Only fools and fanatics would believe a con so outlandish. Its collapse exposes the rottenness of a corrupt system. We should thank Arday. I say, now that he's back on the market, give him tenure at Harvard.

Dominic Green is a historian and columnist @drdominicgreen.

MORE PERFECT UNION

AT 1:13 a.m. on Nov. 23, 1996, I stood in my parents' house in Penn Hills, Pa., and pressed play on my father's answering machine. Seven messages. The last came from a hospital worker, her voice as calm as if she were describing a spring morning: My father was in the ICU. He had been shot. He had been taken down twice for surgery on his belly and had "a way to go."



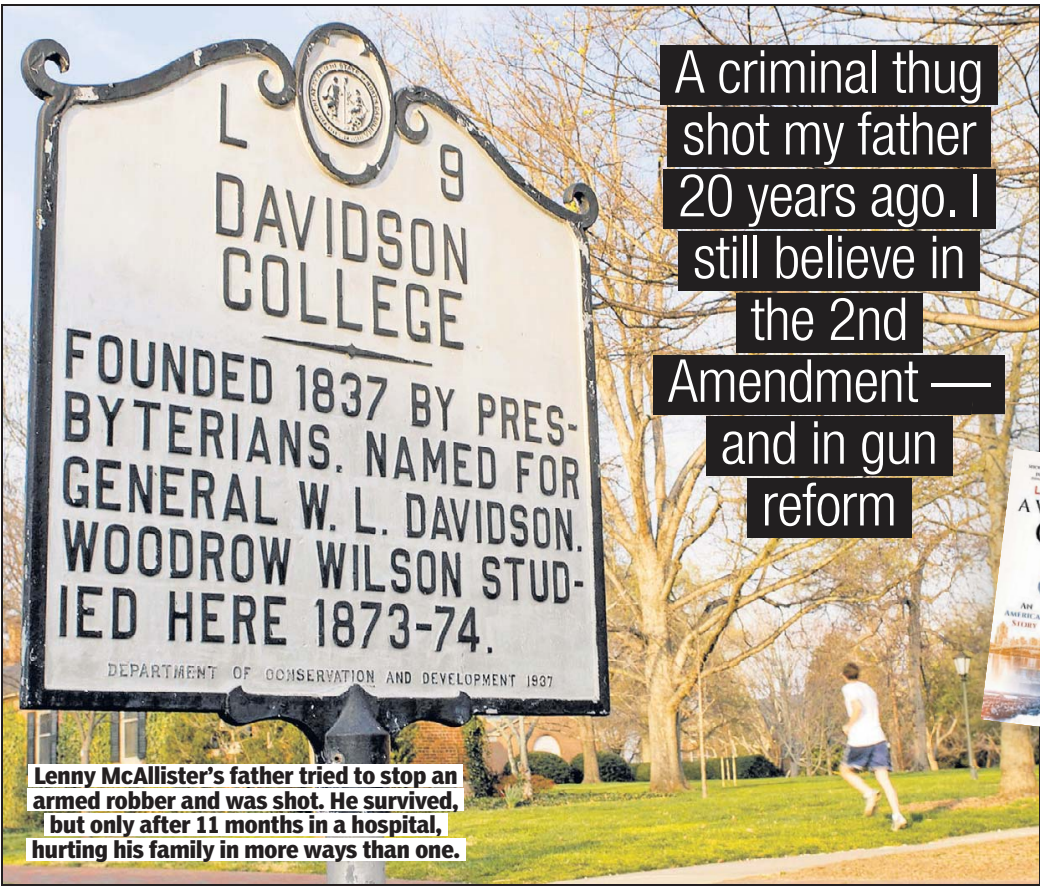
LENNY McALLISTER

I was 24 — a college dropout working the twilight shift dispatching ATM repairs, an unmarried father trying to keep my toddler daughter fed on \$6 an hour. My father was a steelworker at USX Clairton Works, born during World War II, forged in poverty and the civil-rights era, the man who pushed three kids through some of the best schools around.

Two weeks earlier, he'd told me I had wasted everything he'd invested in me.

I later learned the shooting had happened days before the voicemail. A home invasion at an associate's house. My father confronted the robber, tried to disarm him and took one bullet in the gut before the kid ran. He had been unable to speak — unable even to give the hospital his own phone number. For days, no one in our family knew.

When I reached his ICU bed, his head was swollen beyond recognition. His midsection had been left open under mesh and gauze because there was too much swelling to close him up. In a hospital elevator on the way in, alone, I dropped to my knees and made God a deal: Spare his life,

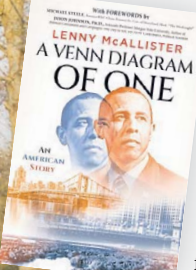


Lenny McAllister's father tried to stop an armed robber and was shot. He survived, but only after 11 months in a hospital, hurting his family in more ways than one.

A criminal thug shot my father 20 years ago. I still believe in the 2nd Amendment — and in gun reform

is still with us today. Thirty years later, I still fast the first three days of every month. Thirteen years after that night, I walked across the stage at Davidson College to finish the degree I'd abandoned — with my own children watching. The news cycle about his shooting came and went within a few days. A generation later, we're overcoming the effects of gun violence.

When people ask where I stand on guns, I don't give them the answer they expect from a Black man, or the one they expect from a Republican. I respect the Second Amendment. But I also believe what the numbers tell us: Roughly 44,000 Americans die from firearms a year. More than 7 in 10 murder victims are shot. And



gun deaths among children ages 1 to 17 have risen 106% since 2013 — the leading cause of death for that age group since 2020.

In 2013, former Sens. Pat Toomey (R-Pa.) and Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) tried to enact common-sense gun reform. Their goal was simple: Create a reasonable and effective mandatory background check for gun buyers. We must revisit that commitment.

The founders never claimed their work was finished — that's what "a more perfect union" means. There is a right greater than the right to bear arms: the right to a liberty-filled life. My father fought for his in an ICU bed for 11 months. The least the rest of us can do is have an honest conversation.

Lenny McAllister is a political commentator and the author of "A Venn Diagram of One: An American Story" (Frederick Douglass Books), out Aug. 11.

Chatter



'His security blanket is his phone and the dopamine from how many likes he gets on a post.'

— a City Councilmember on the secretly thin-skinned Mayor Mamdani



'I don't want to cancel it.'

— Wisconsin gov. candidate Francesca Hong walking back previous comments on Thanksgiving



'This is the last chance ... before decapitation.'

— President Trump on Iran signing a peace deal



'All [Fauci] had to do was tell the truth.'

— Sen. Rand Paul as the Senate voted to hold Dr. Anthony Fauci in contempt

THE push is back on for slavery reparations.

In July, the New York Civil Liberties Union issued a report urging the immediate adoption of reparations. As Lanessa Owens-Chaplin — one of the report's authors and director of the Racial Justice Center at NYCLU — puts it: "Reparations are a debt that is owed. Enslaved Black people built the foundation of New York's economy ... Reparations must be extended to all Black New Yorkers descended from those enslaved by New York State."

The NYCLU report is predicated on an undeniable reality: the persistent wealth gap between black and white households. But all this fails to grapple with the central problem of reparations payments: Not all white New Yorkers benefited from slavery, but all New Yorkers would have to shell out to support the payments.

HOWARD HUSOCK

I uncovered the complications of the issue when, as part of a local America 250

project, I researched the history of slavery in my own Westchester County suburb. The town of Rye was once an agricultural village on the shores of the Long Island Sound. Small family farms stood side-by-side larger estates on which the enslaved labored, raising beef cattle and produce bound for the Manhattan market.

Here's the complication: Slave ownership among white people was far from universal. Of 130 slaves present in the town in 1790, 68 were owned by only six families — including the family of John Jay, the country's first chief justice and a leading abolitionist. Moreover, households that did not own slaves at all (163) were far greater in number than those that did (42).

Most white townspeople, in fact, were poor. Seventy-seven households were listed as owning only "house and lot." Their tiny properties were worth less than \$500, or around \$10,000 adjusted for inflation. Some were worth as little as \$60 — about \$1,000 today.

Reparation complication

Few New York families owned slaves. John Jay's estate (circle) did, but he was a key abolitionist.

Lefties across the nation are renewing their fight for slavery reparations because they don't understand American history

There were also wealthy landowners who did not engage in slavery at all — including, notably, a family of Quakers. That family's members all worked the land on their own and competed with the unpaid labor force of the slaveowners.

In 1799, Gov. John Jay signed the Gradual Abolition of Slavery Act, which freed the children of slaves born after July 4, 1799. Then, in 1817 another law required that all slaves born before 1799 also be freed over the next 10 years. Rye's slaveowners freed most of their slaves well ahead of this deadline — by 1820, only 14 slaves remained in the town compared to 126 freed black people.

Notably, by 1850, the town's population began to swell with the arrival of white Irish and German servants

and laborers who arrived long after slavery had disappeared.

Nor was my town an outlier. In 1800, 417 of 4,320 residents of lower Manhattan were enslaved, census records show. That's a significant number. But 76% of households had no slaves. It becomes difficult to make the case that their descendants should be made to pay reparations for something they had no part in and may actively have fought against. But that's the logic of a state budget item for reparations.

States considering reparations have had to reckon with these complications. Such questions have stalled efforts in California. The Golden State has even gone so far as to establish a "Reparations Task Force" to sort out

these issues. California lawmakers passed a slate of reparations bills in 2025, including one that would have given college-admission priority to descendants of the enslaved. Gov. Gavin Newsom vetoed many of these but signed another intended to create a structure to administer payments.

Maryland Gov. Wes Moore, an African American Democrat, took the courageous step of vetoing legislation for the state to study reparations — appropriately emphasizing the need for government to seek to advance the economic prospects of all citizens. The state General Assembly then overrode his veto.

The history I discovered in my own town suggests Moore was right.

Reparations advocates also miss another dangerous fact: Government intervention can have unanticipated effects. Consider, for instance, another historical injustice they highlight, slum clearance. The NYCLU is correct that the razing of black neighbor-

hoods can be connected to the current disparity in assets between white and black households, which lost property and businesses during such processes.

But slum clearance to "renew" cities was promoted not by racists but by progressives, including Harry Truman. He believed that demolishing poor black neighborhoods and replacing them with public housing would benefit black Americans.

The benefits of reparations may prove elusive, as well. A one-time cash payment will not likely do much to close the wealth gap — and will inevitably prove politically divisive. It certainly won't help as much as an effective public-education system and public safety would. Better to invest in those practices than ask those who weren't involved in the sin of slavery to pay for it.

Howard Husock is a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and author of "The Projects: A New History of Public Housing."

VETTED

Share of Americans who say they trust leaders with military experience:

77%



Source: Gallup

'Our system is inundated with waste, fraud and abuse.'



— NY state Sen. Dean Murray, backing a bill to let local governments prosecute Medicaid fraud

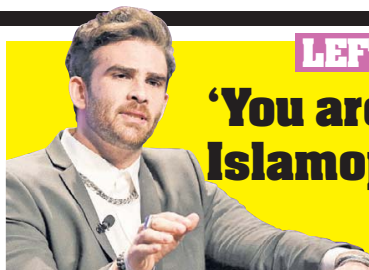
LEFT IN THE LURCH

'You are all unbelievably Islamophobic pieces of s—t.'

— Hasan Piker to establishment Democrats after Abdul El-Sayed's Michigan Senate primary win

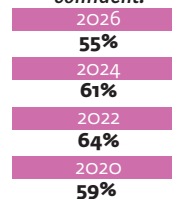
'What's your choice between a Republican and a crazy person?'

— Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) on the far-left candidates' primary wins



FAIR SHAKE

Fewer Americans than in previous years are confident that elections are fair. Share who remain confident:



Source: Pew

FORGET REGRET!

THE Hutton Company Brick Works literally built New York brick by brick. For over a century, thousands of brickmakers mixed, molded, dried and baked the city's most essential building blocks on a 100-acre site along the banks of the Hudson River, in the city of Kingston. Look inside the walls of the Empire State Building, Grand Central Terminal, the Cloisters and many other New York landmarks, and you will find a brick bearing the Hutton stamp.



JAMES PANERO

The kilns went cold in 1980, and the yards sat in ruins for decades. But when Broadway enthusiast Joshua Saltman first saw the old brickyard, he knew this was the missing block for building his own grand vision: a Broadway "Woodstock"—just down the road from where the original festival took place.

"The area where there's going to be performances is built on a landfill of millions of broken, discarded bricks. It feels historic," he told The Post in the days leading up to The Festival—aka Broadway Fest—his one-of-a-kind, three-day theater extravaganza taking place next weekend.

Can he move 42nd Street a hundred miles north for the weekend? And will audiences come?

The Festival's main pavilion stage sits beneath the roof of one of the original factory buildings. Two other stages, along with dining venues, campfire grounds and a "stage door" area for autographs, are planned among the site's hulking ruins. On one side, derelict kiln sheds serve as an industrial backdrop. On another, the gantry crane that once loaded pallets of bricks onto barges still reaches out into the river.

The revitalized Hutton Brickyards—recast in recent years as a luxury venue—is a fittingly unexpected setting for what will be a music-filled "weekend in the country," as The Festival is billing its Friday-night opener. The Festival's VIP talent is star-studded: Scheduled singers include Audra McDonald, Kelli O'Hara, Renée Elise Goldsberry, Christopher Jackson and Brian Stokes Mitchell.

Starting Friday afternoon, more

than 40 Broadway personalities will perform some three dozen shows across three separate stages, including several musical previews, ending in Broadway "raves," piano-bar "hijinks" and campfire singalongs.

Cabins throughout the site and other local accommodations will house the hundreds of staffers—dancers, musicians, stage managers, lighting crew, video crew, sound crew—that must be brought in to mount the unprecedented multistage event in this small town that was, for a brief moment in 1777, the state's first capital. Shuttle buses are scheduled to run to and from area hotels and offsite parking throughout the weekend for the thousands of ticket-buyers planning to attend.



THE founder and main backer of The Festival, Saltman, is an unlikely impresario.

Walking around Zabar's, he easily blends into the Upper West Side crowd. Now 56 years old, he is a Broadway obsessive with a self-deprecating veneer. He is also my wife's cousin with an eye on the bottom line. (Despite years of festive family reunions at Barney Greengrass, we still had to buy our own tickets to his festival.)

A native of southern California, Saltman attended Columbia College and Law School. During his studies—he describes law school as a low point in his young life—Broadway became a second home. "It became a bit of a refuge for me," he says. Jerry Zaks' Tony Award-winning revival of "Guys and Dolls," which ran on Broadway from 1992 to 1995, proved to be a particular lifeline.

"Who knew that 'Guys and Dolls' was such a fun thing? That was a watershed moment for me. I feel like there's no better sort of well-crafted songs than the American Songbook," he says.

After beginning his legal career in New York, Saltman moved to Los Angeles to join Disney as in-house counsel. Still, Broadway kept bringing him back. Over the years, he accompanied friends to California's Coachella Festival. He also vacationed with his wife, Jill, on Broadway cruises. Along the way, he wondered if his interests in festivals and Broadway could somehow be combined.

"We do these rituals that give our life meaning," he explains. "The experiential nature of being able to go do something that is a destination, immersive, and to see music and learn music and experience things with like-minded people—that kind of setting became very appealing. I was with my friends all sitting around one year and I remember saying, 'What if we did a Coachella for Broadway?' We joked about it. Mandy Patinkin instead of Radiohead."

Saltman says he was also feeling his age at the pop festivals. "As I got older, the music got younger, and so I'm like, I don't need to wait till 11 p.m. to see Ariana Grande. She doesn't want me there."

As his idea for a Broadway festival took hold, Saltman first pitched it inside Disney. "I called it 'Mous-chella.' It never got traction," he says.

After working on his idea for a decade, he struck out this year on his own to build a production team of festival and Broadway veterans with producer David Schwartz and directors Jerry Mitchell and DB Bonds. He also reached out to Adam Pascal, a star from the original cast of "Rent" (and one of those Broadway-cruise performers). Pascal, it turns out, is still in touch with the original cast. "They have a text chain," Saltman says.

A 30th anniversary "Rent" reunion became the anchor for The Festival's Saturday show.

"It's going to be very emotional," Saltman says. "Adam emailed me the other day. He's like, the 'Rent' reunion's an hour. Can we have an hour and a half?"

The roster grew from there. When Saltman learned McDonald could only join on Sunday, he extended the initial schedule from two days to three. His musical supervisor, Dan Lipton, also reached out to each performer to see what they would like to sing, and with whom.

"I'm like, okay, yes, yes, yes, 'Suddenly, Seymour' is in there," Saltman says. "Kelli O'Hara and her daughter are going to sing a song together. Kelli and Renée are going to sing a beautiful duet from 'Carousel.' Adam Pascal, Lauren Patten, Jenn Colella and Norbert Leo Butz are going to do Crosby, Stills & Nash. Chris Jackson from 'Hamilton' is

Inside one man's crazy plan to create Broadway's version of Woodstock in upstate New York



repeat for photo shoots.

going to sing some James Taylor. The songs are incredible."

I suggest that seeing it come together must be exciting.

"Exciting for you, terrifying for me," Saltman says between rehearsals with choreographer Jon Rua and venue tours as his cellphone goes off. "It is so many logistics, the transportation and housing infrastructure for all of the people coming up." He was still deciding where to put the step-and-

MEANWHILE, Karl Slovin, the owner and developer of Hutton Brickyards, says The Festival is "exactly the kind of thing we built this place to make possible."

The Festival is a seven-figure gamble. Saltman says he expects to sell 2,500 tickets. Nearly 2,000 weekend passes have already been purchased at the time of writing, ranging from \$400 for general admission to \$1,500

Such Broadway stars as Kelli O'Hara (top inset) and Christopher Jackson (bottom inset) will perform during The Festival in Kingston, NY, at the newly revamped Hutton Brickyards (below).



for VIP access. Limited day tickets are also available. But a little back-of-napkin math reveals it's unlikely he turns a profit.

Saltman confirms this. He says he will not make back his investment. He just hopes to build enough goodwill among Broadway audiences and performers that they will want to come back another year. "This can easily be profitable. It's just going to take me a couple years to get there."

"It's a crazy idea, because it's a tremendous personal expense to me," he

says. "You have to bring in everything. So I'm bringing in three stages. I'm bringing in lighting and sound and rigging and massive video screens. I got to bring in 3,500 chairs, right? I do. That's a lot of chairs. And I'll be housing 150 people."

He jokes his parents are still not quite on board with the passion project. "I think my father might be calling in complaints to Page Six."

James Panero is executive editor of The New Criterion

Courtesy of Broadway Fest 2026; David Niles; Hutton Brickyards; Getty Images; Rebecca J. Michelson

Festival founder Joshua Saltman says the Great White Way — and productions such as Jerry Zaks' "Guys and Dolls" (pictured) — kept him going during law school. He spent years trying to perfect his idea of an event that was part Coachella, part Broadway.



AMERICA'S OLDEST CONTINUOUSLY PUBLISHED DAILY NEWSPAPER

NASA's No. 1 Peril

NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman says America will not only get back to the moon within a few years, and also build a permanent, inhabited base there within the next two decades; what he leaves out is the clear fact that the chief peril for dreams of becoming an interplanetary species is a Democratic Party victory in 2028.

Isaacman's techno-optimism is something the nation desperately needs, the kind of inspiring vision increasingly rare in American politics.

Americans love space and our efforts to explore it as far and as fast as possible; the stunning success of this year's Artemis II's lunar flyby has kindled our collective imagination. Going to the moon — landing there, then building a base — will fan those flames further, inspiring patriotism and recruiting a generation of little kids to be future astronauts.

On the science, we have to return and build a base there if we're serious about getting to Mars and beyond: It will play a key beachhead role in further solar-system exploration (to say nothing of the scientific benefits we may reap, like moon-abundant helium isotopes crucial to developing quantum computers and fusion reactors).

Yet here on earth, again and again we confront Democrats' technophobia and reactionary fear of change. This, after all, is the party fanning the flames of AI data-center hysteria as well as psuedo-scientific "climate action."

Meanwhile, Isaacman's vision includes — gasp! — private-sector innovation in spaceflight, nuclear

power and more. That's exactly as it should be: Operators like SpaceX and RocketLab have proven that private companies will do spaceflight better, faster and cheaper than the government.

Yet today's Democrats have made rocketeer-in-chief Elon Musk into Public Enemy No. 2 (after the president). Recall that in 2024 the California Coastal Commission tried to stop Musk from launching rockets *explicitly* due to his political views; Musk had to sue to stop this blatant illegality. A Democratic White House after 2028 will bring such moves on steroids, likely cloaked in regulatory footdragging and endless environmental review.

NASA was a disgrace for decades, with bloated budgets and horrific inefficiencies putting a damper on our pushing the frontiers of space exploration, even as Beijing began to erase our decades-long lead on that front (China aims to get its taikonauts on the moon by 2030). The agency's found new energy and wiser direction under Trump and Isaacman, but anti-tech, anti-innovation leadership under Democrats will kill that rebirth its cradle.

Democrats once (quite rightly) embraced innovation and tech as a means to improve society. Unless they recover their enthusiasm for letting brilliant engineers, scientists and businessmen do what they do best — invent, discover and scale — the Isaacman NASA renaissance and all the grand dreams it might make real will end up as one more blip on an increasingly dim horizon.

The Boos Are Just Beginning

Twice now, Mayor Mamdani has suffered public humiliation at events where he was unwanted. Will he go for a third strike at next month's 9/11 ceremonies?

Last week saw him viciously booed at a National Night Out event on Staten Island, an event where law enforcement and other first responders connect with their community. When Mamdani clambered onstage, the 3,500 or so locals erupted so resoundingly that he cut his remarks to a bare minute before fleeing the stage. No surprise: It was a prop crowd, and the mayor has called the Finest "racist" and "a threat to public safety."

He was fresh off a similar humiliation at the Queens funeral for Sgt. Angel Rampersad, killed by an Iranian missile and drone strike: He showed up expecting to speak — only to find the grieving family didn't want him uttering a word.

Again, no surprise: He's a staunch defender of America's enemies around the globe, from Venezuela to Cuba, and effectively backed Tehran after President Trump launched airstrikes against the regime. Rampersad's loved ones had no desire to

let him use their grieving to score some PR points. This is the downside of winning City Hall as he did: Mamdani has a small base of core supporters, but most New Yorkers never wanted him.

Now the 9/11 ceremonies loom. It's hard to see how any mayor could skip this most solemn civic event, yet *this* mayor — with his rocky relations with first responders and his . . . let's call it, his complex approach to Islamist terror — will fit in very uneasily, at best.

Many families have made it plain they don't want Mamdani there. Maybe it was a mistake to pal around with the likes of Hasan "America deserved 9/11" Piker, after all. At least he doesn't have to speak at Ground Zero, thanks to the blessed precedent that no politicians do.

City Hall should play the whole 9/11 week as humbly as possible — and stomp on the flack who suggested that the mayor's presence at the event would somehow "honor" the families. Much of New York barely tolerates Mamdani as it is; he'll be wise to step carefully, lest he provoke a disturbance no one can want on a sacred day.

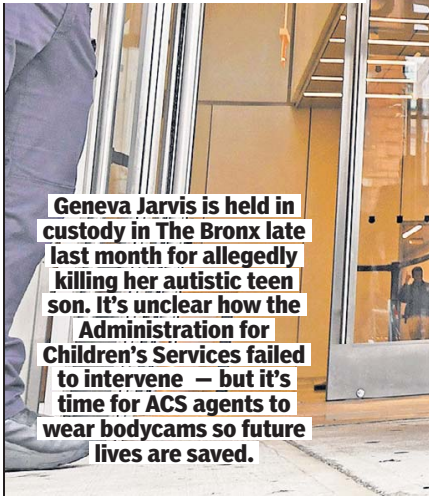
THINK OF THE CHILDREN!



THE Jarvis children "used to be strong, but then she had to push them up the steps," according to building superintendent Dennis Rivera. "They couldn't climb." It's been more than a week since Geneva Jarvis, 36, and her mother, Denise Jarvis, were charged with the murder of Geneva's 16-year-old son Adonis. The nonverbal autistic teen weighed only 59 pounds when he was brought to The Bronx's Lincoln Hospital in March, authorities say. His twin brother, who suffered from the same disabilities, was only 60 pounds, but managed to survive.



NAOMI SCHAEFER RILEY



Geneva Jarvis is held in custody in The Bronx late last month for allegedly killing her autistic teen son. It's unclear how the Administration for Children's Services failed to intervene — but it's time for ACS agents to wear bodycams so future lives are saved.

brother, who suffered from the same disabilities, was only 60 pounds, but managed to survive.

With the sadly unsurprising reports that the family has been on the radar of the Administration for Children's Services since at least 2014 (when cops say ACS investigated an allegation that their mother was failing to give the boys seizure medication to treat their epilepsy), it is time for the public to demand transparency from the agency responsible for protecting abused and neglected children.

Gov. Hochul has astonishingly failed to sign legislation that would allow the Department of Investigation to get more access to ACS records in cases where there has been a fatality or where workers have been accused of sexual abuse. But the time has come for bolder action. The state should consider a tool that has been used to shed light on the actions of other government agencies — body-worn cameras.

The demand for bodycams on police officers began in earnest in 2014 after the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., and has steadily increased since then. As of 2023, 82% of police departments used them. In recent months, there has been a growing call for bodycams on ICE agents as well. Front-line workers in Child Protective Services are performing a law-enforcement function and they too should be added to this list.

Just as with police officers, there are always conflicts when child-protective services show up to investigate a report of child abuse or neglect. Were the workers respectful? Did they follow proper procedure. A lawsuit against ACS filed in 2024 charged that its workers were routinely performing unnecessary strip searches on children.

As much as I think child-protective service workers are undertrained or just incompetent, I am skeptical of such sweeping claims. But by all means, let's look at the video.

Bodycams for police have not revealed much in the way of system-wide bias or corruption, but they have shed light on individual incidents and ensured that officers are held accountable or exonerated in accordance with the evidence.

There is also potential for bodycams to improve practices throughout the child-protection system. Agencies throughout the country are understaffed — some report a 40% turnover rate. Training includes too much on reducing racial disparities in child welfare and not enough on how to actually conduct a real investigation.

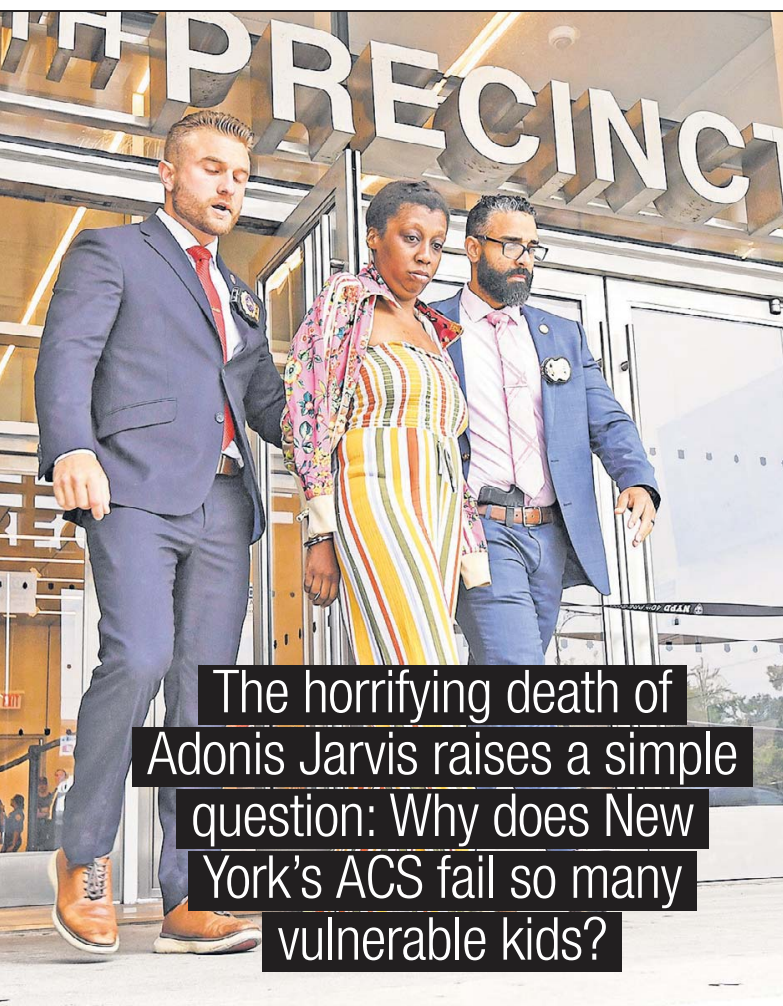
One state child-welfare leader recently told me that she asked a worker why she didn't ask more questions of a family later found to be engaged in severe maltreatment.

"That seemed nosy," the worker told

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Matthew McDermott for NY Post, Splash News

her. Can you imagine a police detective giving a similar response?

Being a frontline worker for a child welfare agency is a hard job — going into potentially dangerous environments, asking hard questions, gathering relevant evidence. Bodycams would show that we are not equipping workers with the right skills.

They would also show the public some of the disturbing circumstances that CPS workers regularly encounter. We have now seen the pictures of the Jarvis home piled high with debris. Adonis was reportedly found covered in flies and feces, authorities say. The superintendent says that hundreds of pounds of clothing have been removed from the apartment.

But what did this apartment look like 12 years ago when investigators first came by? Or during another visit seven years later? How did Geneva and Denise Jarvis act then? Did they ask for help or did they behave as if they were suffering from mental illness or engaged in substance abuse (as the vast majority of the parents in these cases are)?

It is not uncommon these days to hear that the children investigated by ACS are suffering from poverty, not neglect. Indeed, educators in New

York City schools have actually been discouraged from reporting families to ACS, and should instead offer to “support” them. (Which apparently is what happened in the case of the Jarvis family.) But if these teachers and administrators could see what was going on in many of these homes, they would report families to the state’s child-abuse hotline immediately.

Bodycams would show the public what neglect really looks like.

One child welfare leader recently told me that her investigators actually have a separate pair of shoes for work because they so often encounter human and animal feces on the floor of homes they visit. People who are just poor may not have all the resources we would like them to, but the idea that any sane, sober person would have a home littered with excrement simply beggars belief.

Bodycams would allow New Yorkers to see that there are parents of young children behind closed doors behaving in the same unpredictable, crazy and violent ways as the city’s homeless population on the streets. And they would see ACS workers pretending everything is just fine.

Naomi Schaefer Riley is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

LETTERS

Mt. Vernon lunacy

Just when you think you have lived long enough to have seen and heard it all, you read that a Mount Vernon deputy police commissioner drove a getaway car for her son’s gang shooting — with the help from her ex-con husband, no less (“Police brass ‘crime’ family,” Aug. 5).

To say it’s getting crazier and crazier out there is the understatement of the year. Has everyone in Mount Vernon gone totally out of their minds?

J. Staskewicz, Southampton, New Jersey

Sticker shock

Here we are again: warning stickers on cars redux (“‘Sticking’ it to cars,” Aug. 5).

Under Mayor Michael Bloomberg, the City Council rightly halted the practice as unnecessary public shaming and property vandalism. Now, Mayor Mamdani has let it resume.

This practice needs to be stopped again. Let’s hope that other failed practices don’t resume under this mayor.

Phil Serpico, Queens

Why Galliano?

The announcement that John Galliano will be the theme of the 2027 Met Gala is appalling, insulting and hurtful (“Back in fashion,” Aug. 3).

Why would anyone celebrate a designer that was canceled because of his antisemitic rant

in 2011? If this were any other minority group, there would be an outrage of discrimination. But because the current environment in New York City favors anti-Jewish discrimination and hate, it’s acceptable.

Anna Wintour and our mayor should look long and hard at the damage caused by their gross insensitivity and the unwarranted hate thrust upon Jews in New York.

Susan Warner, Manhattan

Pirro’s peril

President Trump once bragged that his new Reflecting Pool liner would “last for at least 50 years” and “you can’t even cut it” with a knife. That was before he falsely accused vandals of using knives or box-cutters to carve a 350-foot gash through this supposedly impervious material (“Trump: Pirro ‘choked,’” Aug. 4).

And now that US Attorney Jeanine Pirro has turned on him, it’s likely she will be the next of the women he has turned against, following in the footsteps of Pam Bondi, Kristi Noem and many others.

Richard Siegelman, Plainview

Fraud-loving Dems

After uncovering over \$230 billion in fraudulent funds, Vice President JD Vance’s anti-fraud task force is calling on Congress to codify more anti-fraud protections in upcoming bills because as he doesn’t want a possible future Democratic administration to “undo all the incredible work” his task force is

doing (“JD pushes new anti-fraud laws,” Aug. 6).

Who would vote for a party that thwarts our government’s efforts to stop taxpayer money from being wasted and used for nefarious purposes? Shouldn’t every politician and government official be anti-fraud?

Eugene Dunn, Glenn Burnie, Maryland

Stop stalling, Don

President Trump is doing an excellent job, but enough is enough (“New 60-day strait pact ‘nearly reached,’” Aug. 6).

He has given Iran’s leaders chances over and over again. Iran doesn’t care about us or Israel, our biggest ally in the Middle East. Trump is starting to look weak. Finish the job and get it over with. How many chances do you want to give them? Tehran is stalling in every aspect — it’s time to flex our power once and for all.

Robert Caprio, Nutley, NJ



Post your comments on stories at www.nypost.com

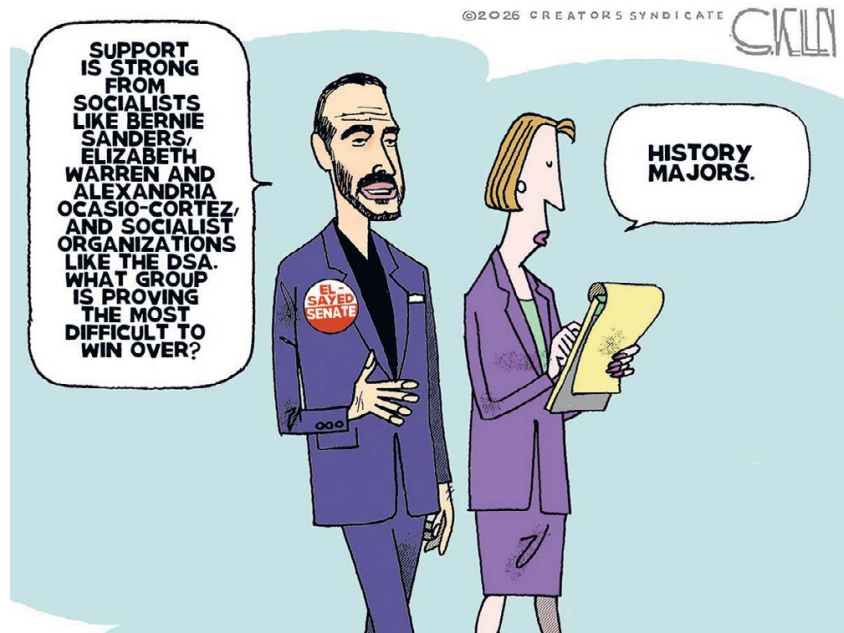


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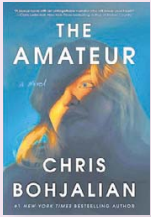
POSTSCRIPT Books



REQUIRED
READING
By Hailey Eber

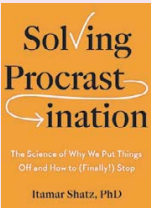
The Amateur: A Novel

Chris Bohjalian (Doubleday)
On a Westchester golf course in the late 1970s, an 18-year-old golf prodigy drives a ball that hits and kills a teen caddy. It first seems like a terrible accident, but closer investigation reveals a number of tawdry secrets behind the life-altering incident.



Solving Procrastination: The Science of Why We Put Things Off and How to (Finally!) Stop

Itamar Shatz Ph.D. (Tarcher)
A Cambridge University lecturer examines procrastinator archetypes and pulls together hundreds of studies to offer up useful strategies for overcoming procrastination.



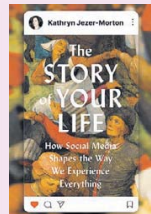
Awake Awake

Fiona Mozley (Algonquin Books)
After suffering a mental breakdown, a 20-something London writer moves back home to York and sorts through her memories — and pseudo-memories — of her intense high school friendships. It's the third novel from Mozley, who was a Booker finalist with her debut novel "Elmet."



The Story of Your Life: How Social Media Shapes the Way We Experience Everything

Kathryn Jezer-Morton (Viking)
A New York magazine columnist examines how social media has changed our self-perception and how we frame our lives, both for ourselves and others.



The Secrets We Hide

Karin Slaughter (William Morrow)
There's more trouble in North Falls, Ga., in the latest from blockbuster thriller writer Karin Slaughter. The Vickery family is already the regular subject of town gossip. Then Allison Vickery is shot and killed in her own kitchen and her daughter narrowly escapes murder. Everyone has ideas about what happened, but Sheriff Emmy Clifton must uncover the truth.



The Magic We Made

Meg Cabot (Avon)
The second book in the "Witches of West Harbor" series finds therapist Frankie Giovanni navigating the explosion in "witch tourism" in her small Connecticut town — and her handsome new neighbor and their otherworldly chemistry.



By CAROLINE HOWE

SOME druggies trip on acid. Others soar on magic mushrooms. Mescaline heads claim using it brings instant enlightenment.

And then there's 5-MeO-DMT, a little-known psychoactive chemical compound idolized among members of a growing international cult, including celebrities. Press on the glands of the obscure Sonoran Desert toad — found in Mexico's vast and deadly desert — and it will release venom. That discharge hardens into brittle flakes, which are then vaporized in glass pipes and smoked — like crack.

The formerly esoteric practice — known among the cognoscenti as "smoking the toad" — is hailed by its growing user base as the "God Molecule."

Under the right guidance, users say, the drug dissolves reality and induces "ego death" as well as an obliterating loss of identity.

The toad, which lives among the ancient Mexican Seri tribe, has become a psychedelics Everest, according to Kimon de Greef's mind-blowing and meticulous "The Ego Trip: Psychedelic Toads, a Trail of Deaths, and the Guru Who Peddled Transcendence" (Doubleday).

As de Greef recounts, the brains and "chief instigator" behind toad smoking was a "charismatic Mexican doctor," Octavio Rettig Hinojosa, "who styled himself as a 21st-century shaman."

Known to his followers simply as Octavio, the doctor "catalyzed a modern psychedelic movement, propelling the toad, and himself, into popular consciousness." But

as de Greef tells us, "a substance capable of inducing the most profound human experiences also opens the door to exploiting them."

Hunter Biden smoked the toad and claimed in his memoir it kept him clean from cocaine for a year.

Former Navy Seal Robert O'Neill — who took credit for firing the shots that took down Osama bin Laden — revealed in an interview with Tucker Carlson he smoked the toad as a treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder.

Mike Tyson confessed on "The Joe Rogan Experience" that he had smoked the toad, and, "I've never been the same. It's almost like dying and being reborn."

Bill Atkinson, one of the first members of the Apple Macintosh development team, told de Greef he first smoked the toad in 2017, describing it as a "psychedelic bungee jump" that offered "training wheels to teach you a divine state of being."

That divine state of being is produced by the toad's internal "veritable chemical factories" in its guts. The croakers have bellies the "girth of softballs" and "bulging glands on their necks and limbs."

HOW do users consume the technically poisonous venom without dying? De Greef explains that "although dangerous to swallow, the secretions of the Sonoran Desert toad undergo a kind of alchemy when vaporized, becoming a catalyst for breakthrough states of transcendence."

Toads have long been invested with powerful symbolic meanings around the world. In medieval Europe, they were key ingredients in witches' brew, and ancient Brahmin texts compare the rhythmic croaking of frogs to students reciting sacred hymns.

But, in the dry, inhospitable Sonoran Desert in Mexico, the toad became an agent for psychic death. Octavio transformed this into a coveted psychedelic experience.

According to the book, the peddler had first been introduced to "a prodigious array of psychedelics" by Gerardo Sandoval, a fellow student at the University of Guadalajara who was convinced he could cure Octavio's cocaine addiction with 5-MeO-DMT. Octavio claimed it kicked the itch and inspired him to become an evangelist for the toad.

CONVINCED of the drug's benefits, Octavio then introduced it to a Northern Mexico tribe overwhelmed by a methamphetamine crisis in the early 2010s. His therapy work with addicts was apparently so successful that the local tribe dubbed him el doctor sapo — the toad doctor.



A TEDx organizer named Klaudia Oliver caught wind of Octavio. "Sensing an opportunity," she coached him on public speaking, styled him and arranged speaking arrangements for him. People began lining up to smoke toad with the doctor.

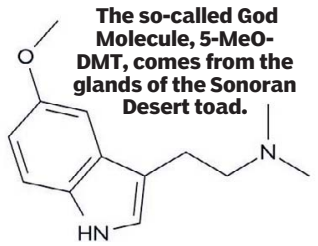
The pair traveled to the 2013 Burning Man Festival, where he celebrated the toad medicine as an ancestral remedy and "the ultimate experience."

Octavio was on the cusp of becoming a "psychedelic superstar," the author writes, and his appearance at Burning Man skyrocketed his fame. The "Pied Piper of toad" became known by his first name, "like some pop diva or soccer star." And he believed the whole world would soon be getting high with him.

He combined a neo-shamanic approach with Seri tradition. During his ceremonies, he "dressed in a red ceremonial Seri and pants, like a Mexican Elvis, shaking his rattle and singing."

Octavio started making money like Elvis, too. He charged for group sessions that brought in thousands, and then he tripled the price. Fame followed. Equipped with a business card that declared him a "practitioner of indigenous knowledge for the whole world," he began traveling the globe with his amphibious potion. His path, he believed, was guided by divine forces.

Octavio was literally and figuratively riding a big high for years.



NY Post Design: Adobe Stock, Getty Images



But de Greef claims that reports emerged that the shaman wasn't always so patient with his disciples. When one group asked what to expect from their first trip, he allegedly shouted, "Put on a fucking diaper and go outside!"

He offered little preparation to his clients and did almost nothing to cultivate a safe experience. The drug sometimes unleashed powerful sexual urges in some women, and Octavio began relationships with several clients.

He was viewed by some as a god, or at least a rock-star shaman. The United Nations Association of Venezuela endorsed him in 2014 as a "carrier of traditional indigenous medicine."

BUT the trips took an even more disturbing turn. In 2016, Octavio was allegedly spotted on video kicking and slapping a terrified male client on a Venezuela beach. Another video reportedly showed him pouring water down the throat of a comatose tripper — as if he were waterboarding him — and using a Taser-like device to motivate reluctant clients.

He defended this monstrous behavior as a vital part of the trip, a way to push past psychological resistance. "That's what I'm trying to do. A real mindf--k for people," Octavio told a psychedelics conference.

That defense didn't hold up when people started dying, according to the book. There are rumors that at least four people had died during his sessions. The messianic figure was eventually arrested by Mexican police in connection with a death, but he was never convicted and denies wrongdoing. He previously said, "My work has been misunderstood, misinterpreted, and misused."

The Seri people had already disavowed him years before. The small Mexican tribe demanded he stop using their name to broadcast his claims about the ancestral roots of toad smoking.

As an activist from the Yaqui tribe told de Greef, Octavio "was looking for validation as a shaman, but he's nothing more than an actor — a fake."

From Hunter Biden to Mike Tyson, the rich and famous are smoking the venom of the Sonoran Desert toad, which lives among the Mexican Seri tribe (above). Wacko Octavio Rettig Hinojosa (inset) became the drug's prophet. Then things got dark.

Still, the onetime crack addict's ambition made 5-MeO-DMT a substance known around the world. It was his proselytizing that helped convince medical professionals to take the chemical seriously. Researchers began running clinical trials with the drug for mental-health and addiction treatment.

The God Molecule will outlast its globe-trotting evangelizer.

This new scientific era, de Greef writes, is "an even more contentious phase" in the drug's story. Octavio, who today continues to run healing retreats in northwest Mexico, was just the God Molecule's "divisive early prophet."

"The pharmaceutical era of toad medicine had begun."

Deep in the Sonoran Desert lives a toad whose venom contains the 'God Molecule.' A wannabe shaman used it to build a drug-addled cult following



State of 'Graceland'

By LARRY GETLEN

IN 1985, when South Africa was still under apartheid, a car drove into the black township of Soweto with an unusual passenger — one of the world's most famous singer/songwriters — concealed in the back seat.

Paul Simon had been invited to Soweto by Sipho "Hotstix" Mabuse, a black South African pop star at the time, but told he would have to take precautions.

"[They] said, 'You'll have to hide under a blanket in the back seat' — which I did," Paul Simon says in the new book, "Days of Miracle and Wonder: Paul Simon and the Trials and Triumphs of Graceland" by Ashley Kahn (Atria, Aug. 11).

Kahn describes the dangers and controversies Simon had to navigate to record "Graceland" with the South African musicians who lent it a uniquely joyous sound, brilliantly contrasting with the character of Simon's introspective lyrics.

The classic album, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this month, won a Grammy for Album of the Year and spent 10 months on the Billboard Top 20, making it the best-selling album of Simon's career.

But to work with South African acts like Ladysmith Black Mambazo, the Boyoyo Boys and General M.D. Shirinda, Simon had to put his reputation on the line — and potentially put the other musicians in danger.

Inspired by a bootleg cassette of radiantly upbeat South African music known as mbaqanga, Simon asked a record company contact to make introductions to various artists there, who were living under horrific restrictions at the time.

They were also rightfully weary of being ripped off, and Simon would



later learn that the musicians held a meeting with their local union to vote on whether to work with him.

(According to Simon, Sex Pistols impresario Malcolm McLaren had recorded with some local musicians there, and used that material on his 1983 debut album, "Duck Rock," without paying or crediting the musicians.)

To assuage their fears, Simon agreed to pay them triple scale for US rates, plus ensure they received credit on the finished album.

The musicians, correctly believing the project could help expose their music to the world, voted to work with Simon.

But that was just his first obstacle. In opposition to apartheid, both the music industry and the world at

large had enacted massive boycotts against performing in the country, and many believed this extended to playing and recording with South African musicians.

Simon sought advice from producer Quincy Jones and singer/activist Harry Belafonte.

Belafonte supported the idea, especially since as a white man, Simon could enter the country more safely than Belafonte could.

Jones told Simon to make sure everyone involved was well-paid and actually wanted him there.

Then, when Simon eventually landed in South Africa, a British journalist was waiting for him at the airport.

Hilton Rosenthal, the South Afri-

can producer who served as Simon's guide through the process, knew the man and made a deal with him.

"I said, 'Look, if you want to do South African music a disservice, publish your story now and you might blow the whole project up,'" Rosenthal says in the book.

He told the reporter, "I'll talk to Paul and get you an exclusive for the release of the album."

Fortunately for Simon, the journalist agreed.

The sessions were exciting for Simon but a bit uncomfortable for the musicians, who faced restrictions — including on using public transportation — and curfews due to apartheid.

Once sessions reached sunset,

"there would be an uncomfortable time when the players couldn't concentrate until they knew there might be a car to take them home," Simon says in the book.

Later, when Simon flew several of the musicians to New York for additional recording, one of the first questions one of them asked was when they would have to register with the police.

It would all prove to be worth it. In addition to being a massive success for Simon, the project had great significance for acts like Ladysmith Black Mambazo, helping them launch an international career that has earned them five Grammy Awards.

The act's members were so moved by the whole endeavor that they gave Simon a Zulu name: Vulindlela — "He who opens the gate."

But in the wake of the album's success, Simon faced a barrage of questions about whether he had done the right thing, from the possibility of appropriation to why the album's lyrics didn't address apartheid head-on.

"The controversy surrounding 'Graceland' became a constant Hydra-like presence," writes Kahn. "At any point, one of the various issues — appropriation, exploitation, the boycott — might raise its head, even as another was addressed."

But Simon defended his project, seeing it as a triumph not only for himself, but for his now-renowned South African collaborators.

"It's almost as if you can't make a significant contribution unless you make things political," he says in the book. "But I think we've made more of a contribution than anybody so far, and we didn't do it that way. We did it another way."

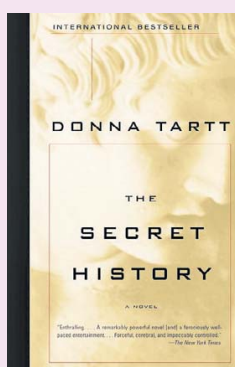
BUZZ: Page-Turners

Riley Sager has written a number of beloved, blockbuster thrillers, and the author has some favorite thrillers of his own. Here, Sager, whose latest book, "The Unknown," is out now, shares some of his top reads.



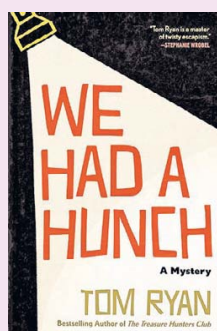
The Secret History

Donna Tartt (Vintage) This acclaimed thriller set amongst classics students at an elite liberal arts college in Vermont is "a book that holds me in a spell every time I read it. And I've read it a lot. A stone-cold classic," Sager said.



We Had a Hunch

Tom Ryan (Atlantic Crime) "It's a brilliant premise — What if teen detectives à la Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys caught a serial killer, grew up to have messy adult lives and suddenly faced a copycat murderer? — that lives up to its promise," Sager told The Post.



Dare Me

Megan Abbott (Little, Brown Paperbacks) "It's another book I'm constantly recommending," Sager said. "To call it the best psychological thriller about cheerleaders ever written would be a disservice. It's one of the best psychological thrillers ever written. Period."



— Lindsey Kupfer



NYPOST.COM/GAMES

Sunday Break



"A+ IN FILM STUDIES" By Joe Deeney

Across

1 Some latte orders
7 Enemy of ancient Athens
13 Alpaca kin
18 "Play slowly," in music
19 Peanut butter and jelly
21 Keeps occupied
22 Public square that gets really sticky in the heat?
24 Would rather not
25 Biblical suffix
26 Sp. address
27 Quite the commotion
28 Ski lift
30 Actor Kilmer
31 Chuckle syllable
33 Founded, as a co.
36 "Don't play," in music
38 Phi ___ Kappa
39 One who can only rasp quietly?
44 Title for Judi Dench
46 Fox or ox
47 ___ monster
48 Spot in a store with toys, water bowls, and leashes?
51 Castle-breaching explosive
53 Sandbox visitor
54 Rapper Dr. ___
55 Matar paneer vegetables
57 Cause friction
60 Cookie whose

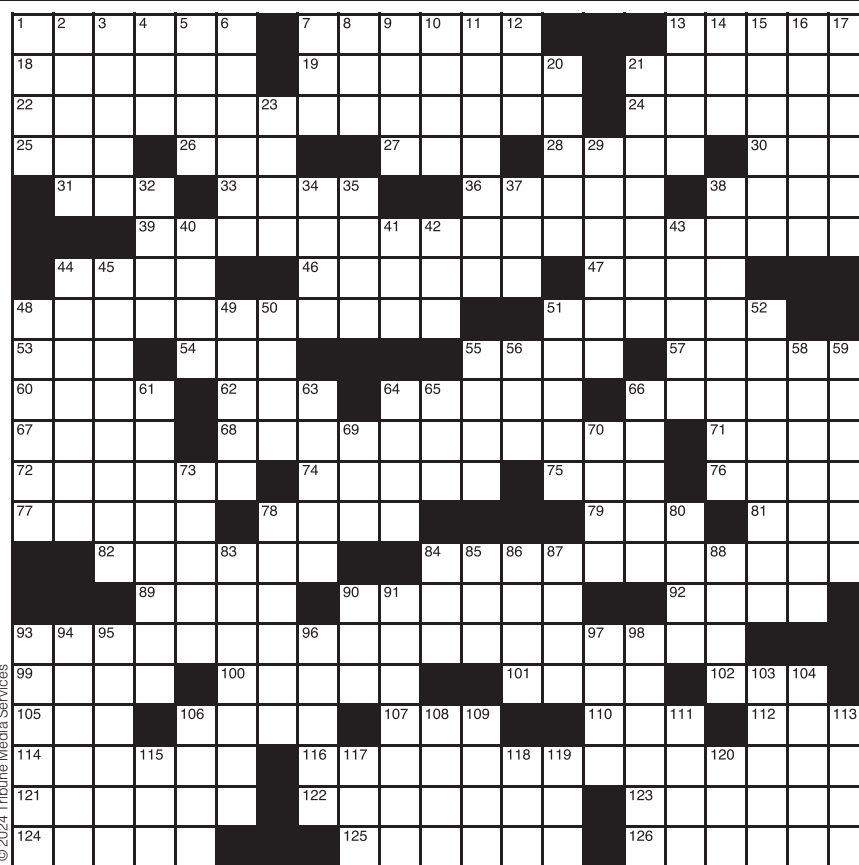
website has recipes for cheesecake and empanadas
62 Derby-sporting Addams
64 Ancient hulled wheat
66 Old Jutland resident
67 "Fiddlesticks"
68 Warning before a particularly scary monster flick?
71 Lysol target
72 Chemist Mendeleev who created the periodic table
74 Castle trenches
75 Hit the slopes
76 Blackthorn berry
77 Beyoncé's "I Am... ___ Fierce"
78 In the mail
79 Blunder
81 Liberty Mutual's bus.
82 Hybrid synth instrument
84 R-rated NASA event?
89 Pedal pushers
90 ___ roll
92 "What fun!"
93 Oak trees?
99 Golfer McIlroy
100 Broadcast again
101 Hurdle for an aspiring JD
102 Halloween mo.
105 Off-rd. wheels
106 "Stranger Things" actor
Wolfhard
107 Hoppy fave
110 Wireless std.
112 "Midsommar"

director Aster
114 Minor flaw
116 Glass ceiling-breaking event?
121 Musical weakness
122 Invertebrate found in every ocean
123 Hackers' shout of success
124 Go out for a while?
125 Beguile
126 Jaunty neckwear

Down

1 Broad valley
2 "Ethan Frome" novelist Wharton
3 Browser storage
4 In the past
5 Many Christmas trees
6 Fancy affair
7 NNW reversal
8 "Play very, very softly," in music
9 Met highlight
10 Assessment
11 Lipton division
12 Curved cutting tool
13 "Nothing you say is true!"
14 Tennis do-over
15 Affectionate sign-off
16 Change genetically
17 Like molecules that cannot form permanent bonds
20 Nickname for Louis Armstrong
21 "There isn't anything else!?"
23 Lettuce or cabbage
29 Neutral shades

32 Web design code
34 Warty amphibian
35 Paul of "The Batman"
37 Piercing tool
38 Tight squeezes
40 Listen to
41 Fix badly?
42 Texting tech
43 Put a name to
44 Natural history museum display
45 "M*A*S*H" star?
48 Not on the same page
49 Savanna antelope
50 Glam gala
51 Trails
52 Intro to many a newsreel
55 Calligraphy tools
56 Some city trains
58 As a departure from the norm
59 Snare
61 Without any planning
63 More family-friendly
64 Walks or runs
65 Where some get tired quickly?
66 Movement while asking "How do I look?"
69 Junior
70 Rubber-stamped
73 Like a daisy
78 Shiny fabric
80 Sultry growl
83 Boston University athlete
84 Trivial objection
85 Product of incomplete



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combustion
86 Ship stabilizer
87 Noted times
88 "Um, think again"
90 Showy carp
91 From Cairo or Cape Town
93 Makes with skill
94 Medium for deep-frying

95 California city near Santa Ana
96 Grams
97 Young hippopotamus
98 Capital west of Montreal
103 Brief appearance
104 Hair texture, e.g.

106 Dust jacket part
108 Ramona, per Beezus
109 Voting against bighorns
111 Short-horned bighorns
113 Some Tripadvisor recommendations
115 Buzzer?

117 "Told you!"
118 Washington's Sea-___ Airport
119 Minecraft material
120 Battle of Helm's Deep combatant

Post SU DOKU

You must put a number, from 1 to 9, in each empty box. Each number must appear once in each horizontal row, as well as in each vertical column and in each of the 3-by-3 grids.

Super Su Doku, inside, multiplies the challenge — and your enjoyment. For that one, put a number from 1 to 12 in each empty box, making sure each number appears once in each horizontal row, as well as in each vertical column and in each of the 3-by-4 grids. Tips and in-depth strategies at www.SudokuWiki.org. For more Su Doku puzzles, see tomorrow's New York Post.

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Very Easy #7,365

	7		2					
2	4	8				9		5
		3	8		7			
4				1			9	7
1	8		7		3		2	6
7	3			2				8
			9		4	5		
3		4				8	1	9
					6		3	

Difficult #7,155

				5				
			7		3	2		6
		8	2			5	3	
6							4	
	5		4		6			
	8							9
	7	4			9	1		
9		1	3		2			
				7				

Challenging #567

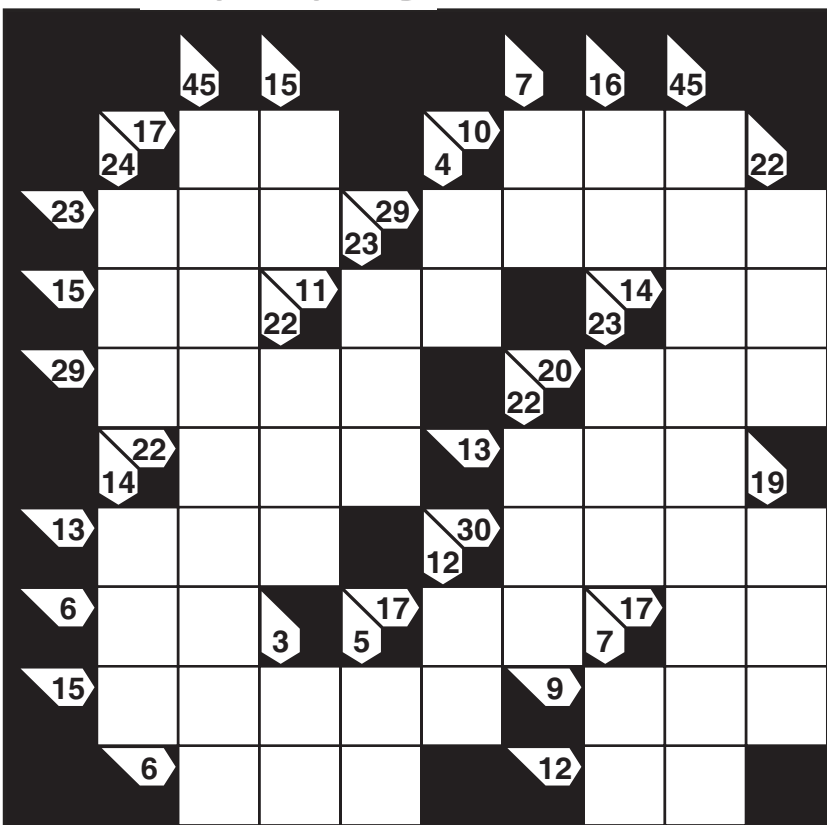
	6					1	2	5	
		5				4	7		8
		3				7			
8									
	1		6		2			8	
									2
								2	
3		7	8				6		
	4	1	5					3	

All Sunday puzzle answers on Page 56

All Sunday puzzle answers are on Page 56

Kakuro

Place 1 to 9 in each white cell. To choose the right number, you need to work from the clues in around the edge. The numbers below the diagonal lines are the sums of the solutions in the white cells immediately beneath. The numbers above the divide are the sums of the solutions immediately to the right. Rows and columns do NOT have to be unique.

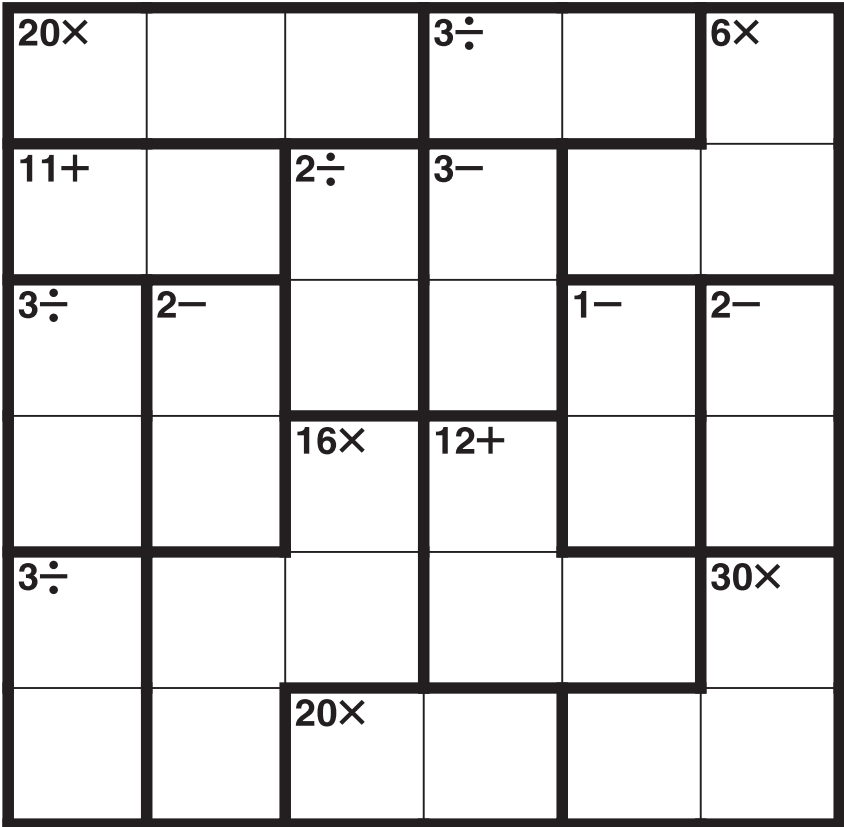


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#567 ▲

KENKEN

Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 through 4 (easy) or 1 through 6 (challenging) without repeating. The numbers within the heavily outlined boxes, called cages, must combine using the given operation (in any order) to produce the target numbers in the top-left corners. Freebies: Fill in single-box cages with the number in the top-left corner.



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Chess

Planning ahead

By Andy Soltis

The prime benefit of having a plan is that you have clues to what your next moves should be.

White had the better winning chances after the first nine moves of this week's game.

But only Black had a plan - expansion on the kingside with ...f5.

That enabled him to look

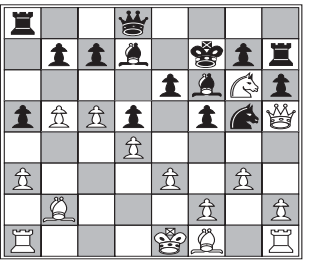
for preparatory moves like 10...Nh5, 11...Qe8 and 12...Kh8.

When his 13...f5 prompted a liquidation of center pawns, White was clueless.

After 21...Qg5! Black was poised to execute a knockout plan of ...Rae8 and ...e3!. White's knight sacrifice, 23 Ne3, was the best of his doomed options.

RUY LOPEZ
Orosel 2026

Alexis Tahay	Brewington Hardaway
1 e4.....e5	18 Kh1.....Qg6
2 Nf3.....Nc6	19 Rg1?.....f4!
3 Bb5.....a6	20 Nxc6.....Bxc6
4 Ba4.....d6	21 Bd4.....Qg5!
5 O-O.....Bd7	22 Ba4.....Bd5
6 c3.....g6	23 Ne3.....fxe3
7 d4.....Bg7	24 Bxe3.....Qe5
8 Be3.....Nf6	25 g4.....Nf6
9 Nbd2.....O-O	26 g5.....Ne8
10 Re1.....Nh5	27 Qh5.....Nd6
11 Bc2.....Qe8	28 Rad1.....Bf7
12 a4.....Kh8	29 Qh3.....Qe6
13 a5.....f5	30 Qg3.....Bh5
14 exf5.....gxh5	31 Resigns
15 dxe5.....dxe5	
16 Nc4?.....e4!	
17 Nd4.....Rg8	



White to play and win.

A.Firouzja - M. Vachier-Lagrave
Warsaw 2026

Last week: 1 Bg5! Bxg5 2 Rxf7 and Rh8+. Or 1...h5 2 Rxf5! gxf5 3 Qxh5.

Sunday Word Force

CORNMEAL

From the word or phrase above, form at least 30 five-letter words, without using more than one form of the same word. For example, drink or drank, not both.

Bridge

"Wendy is mad, as usual," Cy the Cynic told us in the club lounge. "She got lost today, trying to find a client's house."

Wendy, our resident feminist, and Cy, a shameless chauvinist, are always at odds.

"I accidentally changed my GPS voice setting to 'Male,'" Wendy growled. "Now it's saying stuff like, 'Just keep driving around; it's here somewhere.'"

"Women are known for needing written directions to get where they're going," Cy sniffed.

"Tell them how you got lost defending against INT in the penny game today," Wendy sneered.

Wendy and Cy were East-West. After three passes, North opened one spade, an odd choice. When South responded INT, North passed. North-South missed their diamond fit, where nine tricks would have been available. Cy led the deuce

of hearts, and Wendy took the ace and returned the four. South won and led a diamond: eight, jack, ace. The defense cashed two hearts, and the Cynic next led the ten of spades.

South took dummy's ace and led the jack of clubs. When Wendy followed low, South put up his king. Cy won and led another spade

... and South claimed eight tricks: four clubs, two spades, a diamond and a heart.

"Wonderful, partner," Wendy bit out. "Duck the first club."

"I thought you had the queen," Cy protested.

"You didn't think anything, just like a man," Wendy said.

Wendy was a passed hand. She had shown the A-J of hearts and ace of diamonds and was marked with the queen of spades, so she couldn't have the queen of clubs. If Cy lets South's king win, the defense prevails.

East dealer N-S vulnerable

NORTH
♠ A K J 7
♥ 9 7 3
♦ K J 7 6
♣ J 5

WEST
♠ 10 9 6
♥ Q 10 8 2
♦ Q 9 8
♣ A 7 2

EAST
♠ Q 8 4 3
♥ A J 5 4
♦ A 10
♣ 6 4 3

SOUTH
♠ 5 2
♥ K 6
♦ S 4 3 2
♣ K Q 10 9 8

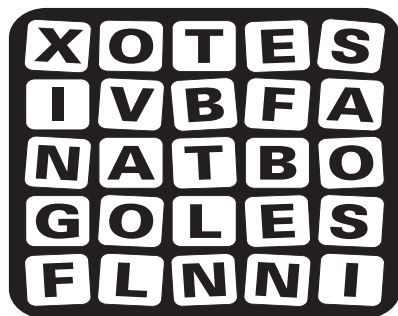
East Pass South Pass West Pass North Pass
Pass Pass 1 NT All Pass

Opening lead - ♠ 2

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By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



INSTRUCTIONS: Find as many words as you can by linking letters up, down, side-to-side and diagonally, writing words on a blank sheet of paper. You may only use each letter box once within a single word. Play with a friend and compare word finds, crossing out common words.

BOGGLE® POINT SCALE
3 letters = 1 point
4 letters = 2 points
5 letters = 3 points
6 letters = 4 points
7 letters = 6 points
8 letters = 10 points
9+ letters = 16 points

YOUR BOGGLE® RATING
151+ = Champ
101-150 = Expert
61-100 = Pro
31-60 = Gamer
21-30 = Rookie
11-20 = Amateur
0-10 = Try again

Boggle® BrainBusters Bonus
We put special brain-busting words into the puzzle grid. Can you find them?
Find AT LEAST FIVE SPORTS in the grid of letters.

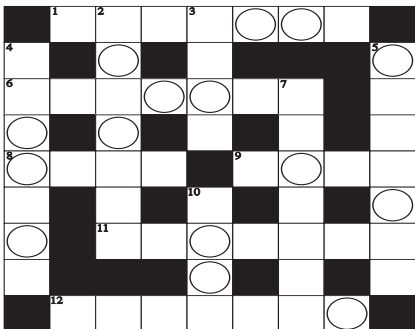
8-9-26

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by David L. Hoyt

Sunday Puzzle



8-9-26

- ACROSS**
- CLUE
- Deep distress
 - shop
 - Above
 - Famous figure
 - Bounce back
 - Oven
- DOWN**
- CLUE
- Atomic
 - Military group
 - Nitrogen compound
 - warning
 - Leave out
 - Swedish pop quartet
- ANSWER**
- NGSIUHA
HINACEM
ERVO
NICO
BERDNOU
NLECERA
- ANSWER**
- ECLUNRA
UITN
MONIMAA
NDROAOT
EECDUXL
BBAA

BONUS

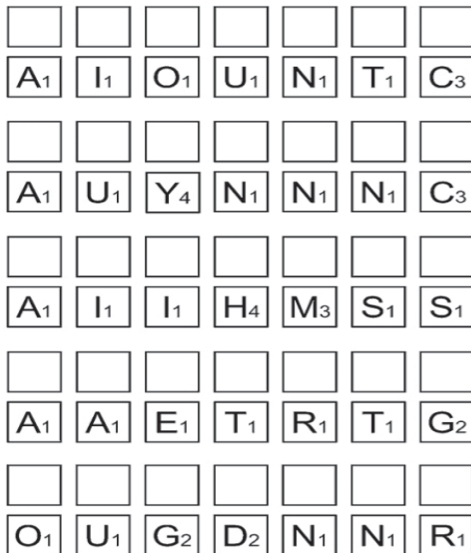
CLUE: _____ ranks among the top producers of cranberries and blueberries globally.

How to play
Complete the crossword puzzle by looking at the clues and unscrambling the answers. When the puzzle is complete, unscramble the circled letters to solve the BONUS.

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3rd Letter Triple

RAK 1

RAK 2

RAK 3

RAK 4

RAK 5

PAR SCORE 260-270
BEST SCORE 315

FIVE RAK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 25 MIN

Super Su Doku

				11			7		1		3
					4	2					11
2	9		11		3	6		7	8	4	12
	7									10	2
	2	9		8						3	
	4	10	12					5	9	6	
	8	4	7					3	6	12	
	3				6		5		2	7	
10	6									9	
9	10	1	6		5	12		2		8	7
3					7	10					
7		12		9			2				

Wonderword

First read the list of words, then look at the puzzle. The words are in all directions - vertically, horizontally, diagonally, backward. Circle each letter of a word found and strike it off the list. The letters are often used more than once, so do not cross them out. It's best to find the big words first. When you find all the words listed in the clues, you'll have a number of letters left over that spell out the Wonderword.

Aerial Cull, Arid Lands, Asia, Biocontrol, Biosecurity, Bladder, Boom, Breeding, Brown, Browsing, Bust, Camelid, Caravan, Climate, Culling, Cycles, Desert, Dingo, Dispersal, Disrupts, Drought, Dunes, Dust, Emission, Erosion, Ethanol, Feral, Find, Footprint, Forage, Grass, Habitat, Herders, Humps, Imported, Info, Invasive, List, Litter, Livestock, Meats, Non-native, Oasis, Outback, Owners, Predator, Rangeland, Ride, Rocks, Saddle, Scientific, Settlement, Soft-footed, Species, Stock Route, Strain, Sustainability, Tagging, Thermal, Tourism, Trade, Trampling, Transit, Trough, Ungulate, Water Hole, Zone

AUSTRALIA'S CAMEL CONUNDRUM SOLUTION: 11 LETTERS

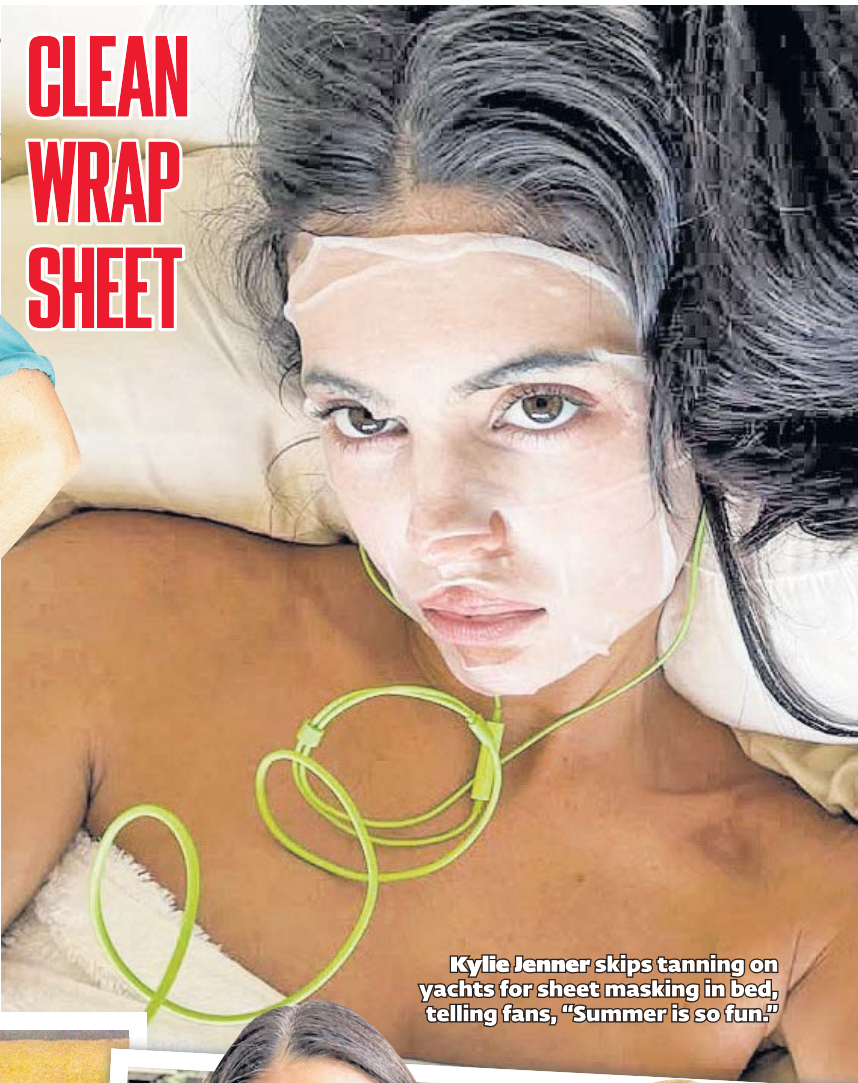
S	A	T	R	E	S	E	D	I	S	R	U	P	T	S	E	L	C	Y	C
T	U	R	D	S	R	E	N	W	O	U	T	B	A	C	K	A	S	T	U
O	O	S	I	R	T	R	A	M	P	L	I	N	G	T	M	E	A	I	L
C	E	N	T	D	O	L	L	U	C	L	A	I	R	E	A	V	D	R	L
K	T	E	O	A	L	U	E	I	F	E	R	A	L	A	T	I	D	U	I
R	A	T	H	I	I	A	G	N	V	V	D	I	F	S	O	S	L	C	N
O	L	H	A	P	S	N	N	H	A	E	D	G	I	I	U	A	E	E	G
U	U	A	B	M	R	O	A	D	T	V	S	S	N	A	R	V	E	S	N
T	G	N	I	D	E	E	R	B	S	F	A	T	D	I	I	N	G	O	I
E	N	O	T	S	N	A	D	E	I	O	O	R	O	T	S	I	A	I	G
R	U	L	A	K	O	W	T	A	L	L	I	O	A	C	M	W	R	B	G
E	H	I	T	C	Z	A	S	S	T	E	I	N	T	C	K	R	O	G	A
D	E	T	O	O	F	T	F	O	S	O	N	T	F	P	R	E	F	R	T
D	R	T	C	R	R	E	H	G	U	O	R	T	Y	O	R	M	O	O	B
A	D	E	L	A	B	R	O	W	N	S	C	I	E	N	T	I	F	I	C
L	E	R	I	D	E	H	U	M	P	S	P	E	C	I	E	S	N	A	Z
B	R	N	M	B	I	O	C	O	N	T	R	O	L	B	U	S	T	T	N
I	S	S	A	R	G	L	A	S	R	E	P	S	I	D	D	I	N	G	O
D	U	S	T	T	H	E	R	M	A	L	G	D	E	T	R	O	P	M	I
D	U	N	E	S	E	T	T	L	E	M	E	N	T	R	A	N	S	I	T



By NY Post staff

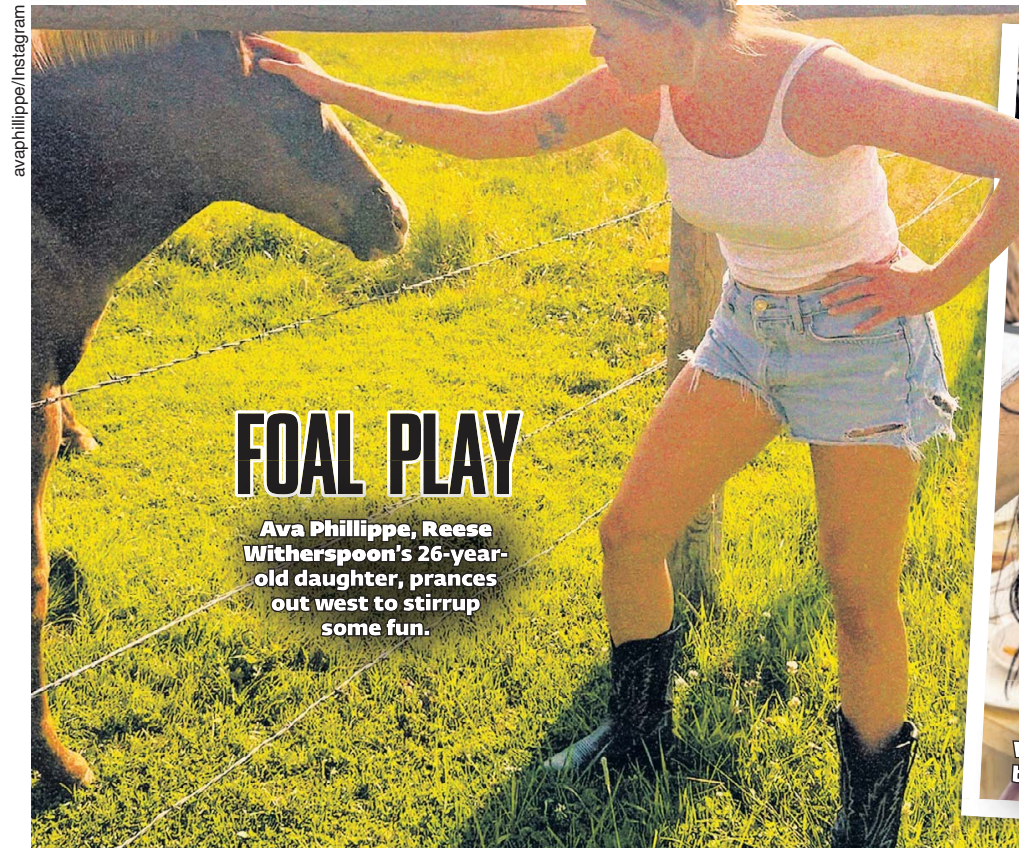
kyliejenner/Instagram

CLEAN WRAP SHEET



Kylie Jenner skips tanning on yachts for sheet masking in bed, telling fans, "Summer is so fun."

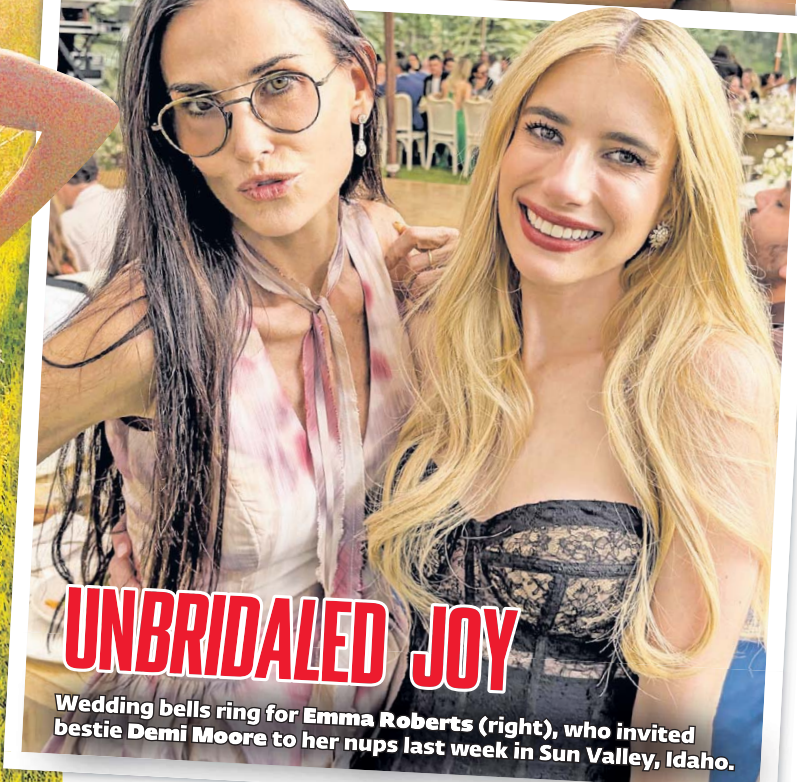
GC Images



avaphillippe/Instagram

FOAL PLAY

Ava Phillippe, Reese Witherspoon's 26-year-old daughter, prances out west to stirrup some fun.



UNBRIDALED JOY

Wedding bells ring for Emma Roberts (right), who invited bestie Demi Moore to her nups last week in Sun Valley, Idaho.

michael/Instagram



BODICE GODDESS

Of corset, Monica Barbaro is flaunting her style to promote her rom-com "One Night Only" at the 92nd Street Y.

GC Images



CHARM SCHOOL'S NEW CLASS

Stars of 1998's "Practical Magic," Nicole Kidman and Sandra Bullock (center), toast to their expanding coven with their co-stars in "Practical Magic 2," Joey King (left) and Maisie Williams, at an event in LA.

David John for Warner Bros. Pictures



THEY RUN THIS TOWN

Dakota Fanning (left) and Jennifer Marsala race to film an Apple TV series in Tompkins Square Park.

STRING PLAYER

Model Emily Ratajkowski may be tied up in her Greek vacation, but she still has time to take pics.

Christopher Peterson / SplashNews.com



emrata/instagram

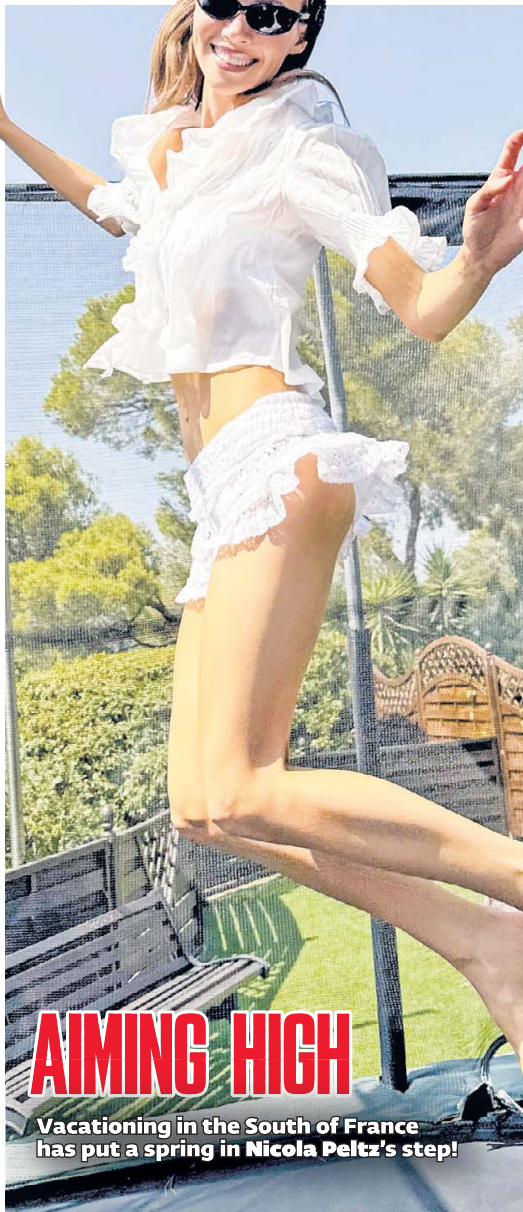
Snaps



A LOOK THAT TEALS THE SHOW

Porsha Williams rocks big heels and bigger hair while visiting Bravo Studios.

GC Images



AIMING HIGH

Vacationing in the South of France has put a spring in Nicola Peltz's step!

nicolapeltzbeckham/instagram



Coney Island's rides are safe thanks to "Law & Order: SVU" stars Kevin Kane (clockwise from front left), Corey Cott, Mariska Hargitay and Kelli Giddish.

GC Images

THRILLING RIDE ALONG

Sean O'Neill/BACKGRID



NIFTY FIFTYS

Ring a "Bell"? Pop star Billie Eilish (in red sweater) transforms her look for her debut film, "The Bell Jar."

DUA DOUBLE TAKE

Spouses Dua Lipa and Callum Turner share true love's kiss at the premiere of his new rom-com, "One Night Only," at the SVA Theatre in Chelsea.

BACKGRID



THREE OF A KIND

Alice Evans turns her 58th birthday at Chateau Marmont into a family affair with daughters Elsie (left), 12, and Ella, 16.

Variety via Getty Images

SHIPSHAPE

Sisters Khloé (left) and Kim Kardashian keep up with each other's vacation fashion on a lake outing.



Tom Kaulitz and Heidi Klum smooch shirtless in St. Barts to celebrate seven years of marriage.

heidi Klum/Instagram

SAND KISSED COUPLE

khloekardashian/Instagram

NIGHT IS YOUNG

Tate McRae (left) and Madison Beer are all smiles at a Variety Power of Young Hollywood event in L.A.



LOOK WHO'S
TALKING
THIS WEEK'S GUESTS



LIVE WITH KELLY AND MARK

Airs in Syndication

Monday: Mark Ballas, Kyle Richards

Tuesday: Jenny McCarthy, Michael Urie

Wednesday: Alan Cumming, Kim Fields, **Sadie Sink** (above)



TONIGHT SHOW STARRING JIMMY FALLON

11:35 p.m., NBC

Monday: Kristen Stewart, **Dominic Sessa** (above)

Tuesday: Dakota Fanning, 50 Cent, Jon Lovitz

Wednesday: Matthew McConaughey, **KATSEYE**



WATCH WHAT HAPPENS LIVE

10 p.m., Bravo

Monday: Kat Johnston, Galyna Saltkowska

Tuesday: Meg Stalter (above), Paul W, Downs

Wednesday: Jasmin Savoy Brown, Emira D'Spain

Sunday August 9, 2026

SP = Spectrum, C = Cablevision, F = FiOS Movies Sports New

Evening	SP	C	F	6:30pm	7:00pm	7:30pm	8:00pm	8:30pm	9:00pm	9:30pm	10:00pm	10:30pm	11:00pm	11:30pm
2	WCBS	2	2	2	News 6:30pm	60 Minutes	Big Brother		Tracker: Leverage (R)		Marshals: On Thin Ice (R)		CBS News 11pm	(11:35) Jets Training
4	WNBC	4	4	4	(6:00) Gymnastics: US Women's Gymnastics Championships Live.		MLB Baseball: Houston Astros at San Diego Padres from PETCO Park. Live.						News 4 New York at 11	News
5	WNYW	5	5	5	6 O'Clock News	Kitchen Nightmares: Love on the Blu (R)	The Simpsons (R)	Animal Control (R)	Universal Basic (R)	Grimsburg (R)	The 10 O'Clock News	Sports Extra	FOX Local Futbol HQ	In Depth
7	WABC	7	7	7	ABC World News	America's Funniest Home Videos: Animals Being	(8:02) Home Videos (R)	(8:33) While You Were Sleeping (1995, Romance) Sandra Bullock, Bill Pullman. PG ★★½					Eyewitness News at 11	
9	WWOR	9	9	9	(6:00) Chicago P.D.	Chicago P.D.: Little Bit of Light	Family Feud (R)	Family Feud (R)	Family Feud (R)	Family Feud (R)	Suits: The Hand That Feeds You		Suits: P.S.L.	
11	WPIX	11	11	11	Paid Program	2012 (2009, Action): Man must save his family from catastrophic, natural disasters around world. John Cusack. PG-13 ★★½					PIX11 News at Ten with Kaity Tong		New York Nightcap	Yankees Nation
13	WNET	13	13	13	(5:00) Performances (R)	Anyone Can Sing	Billy Joel: The 100th - Live at Madison Square Garden				Downton Abbey: Part Two		Solving the Puzzles of the Marlow Murder Club	
21	WLIW	21	21	21	People	Reba McEntire Live from M		Supertramp: Live in Paris 79			Heal Gut, Sharpen Mind Stephen Gundry, Md			
25	WNYE	25	22	25	Aktina TV	Buzz (2009)	Profiles	On Story	Day's Work	Her B Idea	Neighbor		Nightmare Theatre	
31	WPXN	31	3	531	(6:00) NCIS	NCIS: Lost Time	NCIS: Daughters	NCIS: Out of the Dar.			NCIS: Into the Light		NCIS: Going Mobile	
41	WXTV	41	6	41	N Univisio	Fútbol	Fútbol	Fútbol	Leagues Cup: América vs Portland Timbers.					
47	WNJU	47	16	12	Noticias	Operación Triunfo	(7:58) Operación Triunfo				Pica y se extiende		Noticiero	Noticias (R)
55	WLNY	55	10	10	(6:00) ET	Inside	The Point				Judge Judy	Paid	Neighbor.	Neighbor.
A&E		46	46	181	WWE Rivals	WWE Rivals (R)	WWE Rivals (R)		WWE LFG: Pressure is a		WWE LFG: Meet Myka		WWE: Great	WWE: Great
AMC		54	43	231	(6:00) Independence Day (1996, Science Fiction)	Will Smith. ★★★			Walking Dead: Dead City		Walking Dead: Dead City		Signs (2002) Mel Gibson.	
BBCAM		71	101	189	(6:00) Unstoppable (2010, Thriller) ★★★		The Book of Eli (2010, Drama)	Denzel Washington. R ★★★			Unstoppable (2010) PG-13 ★★★			
BET		37	54	270	College ★½	Celebrity Family Feud	Celebrity Family Feud	Celebrity Family Feud			(10:10) Family Feud		(11:20) Family Feud	
BRAVO		18	44	185	Girls Trip	Real Housewives (R)	Real Housewives Atlanta		Ultimate Girls Trip: Where It Began		Ultimate Girls Trip: Where It Began (R)			
CNBC		15	24	102	Shark Tank	Shark Tank (R)	Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Shark Tank (R)		Shark Tank	
CNN		78	25	100	Newsroom	CNN Newsroom	The New Space Race		Decades in Sports		The Eighties: Raised on Television			
COMEDY		45	50	190	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy
DISC		66	27	120	And Afraid	Naked and Afraid	Naked and Afraid: Shipwrecked: The Lost Coast		In the Eye of the Storm		In the Eye of the Storm		(11:01) Eye of Storm (R)	
DISNEY		49	31	250	Zootopia (2016, Family) Idris Elba. PG ★★★½		Phineas	Phineas	Phineas	Phineas	Vampirina	Wizards	Miraculous	Miraculous
E!		24	51	196	Puss in Boots: The Last Wish (2022)		The Super Mario Bros. Movie (2023) Chris Pratt. ★★★½		The Croods: A New Age (2020) Emma Stone. PG ★★★					
ESPN		28	36	70	Countdown	WNBA Basketball Live.			NWSL Soccer: Seattle Reign at Angel City FC. Live.				SportsCenter	
ESPN2		29	35	74	Dodgeball	Wiffle Ball	Kickball		Banana Ball: Bananas vs. Loco Beach Coconuts				X Games	
FBN		43	106	117	Cops	Cops	Cops	Cops	Cops (R)	Cops (R)	Cops (R)	Cops (R)	Cops (R)	Cops (R)
FNC		44	26	118	(5:00) The Big Weekend Show		Life, Liberty & Levin		Sunday Night		One Nation		Life, Liberty & Levin (R)	
FOOD		50	97	164	Grocery	The Great Food Truck Race: Whiskey Trail 1			The Great Food Truck Race: Crowd Crawl, P1				Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby
FREE		38	49	199	Pirates: At World's End	(7:45) Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides (2011, Adventure) Johnny Depp, Penélope Cruz. ★★★							Pirates ★★★	
FS1		400	99	83	Saratoga	STIHL	Leagues Cup Soccer: Cruz Azul vs New York City FC. Live.		Leagues Cup Soccer: América at Portland Timbers.					
FX		10	40	53	(5:30) Iron Man 2 (2010, Action) ★★★		Iron Man 3 (2013, Action) Robert Downey Jr. PG-13 ★★★½						John Tucker Must Die	
HALL			191	240	(6:00) Absolutely Devoted to You (2026)		Roadhouse Romance (2021) Lauren Alaina.		It Was Always You (2021, Romance) Erin Krakow.					
HGTV		64	98	165	Crashers	Crashers: Garage Glam	Holmes on Homes		Maine Cabin Masters		Hunters	Hunters	My Rental	My Rental
HIST		40	47	128	Hazardous	Hazardous History (R)	Hazardous History (R)		Hazardous History		(10:03) The Mega-Brands		(11:05) Hazardous History	
ID		23	171	123	See No	See No Evil	Body Cam: Trust No One		911: Did the Killer Call?		The Murder Tapes		Web of Lies	
LIFE		62	45	140	The Little Girl Who Didn't Exist (2026)		Three Housewives and Body (2026, Thriller)		(10:03) She Stole My Son's Heart (2026, Thriller)					
MeTV		33	33	3	Collectors	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	Golden	Golden	Golden	Golden	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	Family
MSG		27	87	78	NY Knicks	Team Boxing Replay.			Team Boxing: Quarterfinal #4 - LA Elite at Las Vegas Hustle					
MSG Plus		48	88	80	Pickleball	FanDuel Racing			PokerGo High Stakes				PokerGo High Stakes	
MSNOW		14	23	103	Weekend	Connect with Jacob (R)	Crooked on MS NOW (R)		Lawrence O'Donnell (R)		Why Is This Happening?		Why Is This Happening?	
MTV		20	53	210	Bang	Ted (2012, Comedy) Mark Wahlberg. R ★★★			Ted 2 (2015, Comedy) Mark Wahlberg. R ★★★					
NATGEO		65	162	121	Smuggler	To Catch a Smuggler (R)	To Catch a Smuggler (R)		To Catch a Smuggler (R)		To Catch a Smuggler (R)		To Catch a Smuggler (R)	
NICK		6	121	252	Sing 2 ★★★½	Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (2001, Fantasy) Daniel Radcliffe. PG ★★★½					Bang		Bang	Bang
OWN		173	180	145	48 Hours:	48 Hours: Hard Evidence	48 Hours: Hard Evidence	48 Hours: Hard Evidence	48 Hours: Hard Evidence	48 Hours: Hard Evidence	48 Hours: Hard Evidence	48 Hours: Hard Evidence	48 Hours: Hard Evidence	48 Hours: Hard Evidence
PARMT		36	56	54	Bar Rescue	Bar Rescue: Calendar's	Bar Rescue (R)		Bar Rescue (R)		Bar Rescue (R)		Bar Rescue (R)	
SNY		26	60	77	Jets Nation	Yeah ...	Yeah ...		Broadway Boxing: Broadway Boxing 2403		Jets Nation: Inside Camp		Sports	Sports
SYFY		17	48	180	(5:00) Speed (1994) R ★★★	Cloud Atlas (2012, Drama): A killer becomes a hero, and an act of kindness incites a revolution. Tom Hanks.							The Ark (R)	
TBS		8	39	52	Central Intelligence (2016) Kevin Hart.		Bang	Bang	Bang	Bang	Bang	Bang	Bang	The Office
TCM		82	41	230	Heaven Can Wait (1943) Don Ameche.		Leave Her to Heaven (1945, Thriller) Gene Tierney.		Night and the City (1950, Crime) Richard Widmark.					
TLC		52	28	139	90 Day	90 Day Fiancé			Double Lives Of		(11:08) Jay & Pamela (R)			
TNT		3	37	51	The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (2003) Ian McKellen.		The Librarians: The Next		The Librarians: The Next		Rings: Towers (2002)			
TVLAND		85	34	241	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	(9:20) Loves Raymond	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	Seinfeld	Seinfeld
USA		16	38	50	USA Sports	NASCAR Americana	Anna Pigeon (R)		Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: SVU	
VH1		19	52	217	(6:00) Anaconda (1997, Horror) ★★		8 Mile (2002, Drama) Eminem. R ★★★				Just Mercy (2020) Michael B. Jordan.			
WE		59	42	149	Minds	Criminal Minds	Criminal Minds		Criminal Minds		Criminal Minds		Criminal Minds	
YES		53	89	76	MLB Baseball: 2026 Old-Timers' Day Special	Replay.	English Championship: Liverpool vs Wrexham.				MLB Baseball Replay.			
HBO		511	301	400	(6:45) Of the Dragon (R)		House of the Dragon: Dragon Winter		House of the Dragon		(10:15) House of the Dragon (R)		Last Week	
MAX		531	371	420	Prometheus (2012, Science Fiction) Noomi Rapace. R		(8:27) Hall Pass (2011, Comedy) R ★★½				Get Him to the Greek (2010, Comedy) Jonah Hill. ★★½			
MGM Plus		595	395		Gladiator II (2024, Action) Pedro Pascal. R ★★★½				The Westies: Rad Tad		Westies		(10:50) Gangs of New York (2002) ★★★½	
PARSHO		551	321	365	(5:35) Clear and Present Danger (1994)		Gladiator (2000, Drama) Russell Crowe. R ★★★				(10:35) No Country for Old Men (2007) R			

\$1

A WEEK FOR 12 WEEKS

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'CHALLENGE' ACCEPTED

'The Challenge' vets agree Deb Chubb is the show's next breakout star

1 THE CHALLENGE: CUTTHROAT
New episodes stream
Wednesdays on Paramount+

By KAREN KEMMERLE

The Challenge" is back for Season 42 and it's more cutthroat than ever! Now on its new home on Paramount+, the long-running reality competition franchise has the potential to reach a whole new audience, and its stars are ready for change. 7x champion Johnny "Bananas" Devenanzio is "excited" for the future of the series.

While "The Challenge: Cutthroat" may look and feel a bit different, the drama remains the same. After butting heads in "The Challenge 41," Devenanzio, Michele Fitzgerald, and Tori Deal all ended up on Team Orange this season. "At first, we all thought, 'this is a great idea; let's start fresh,'" said Deal. "Then we all

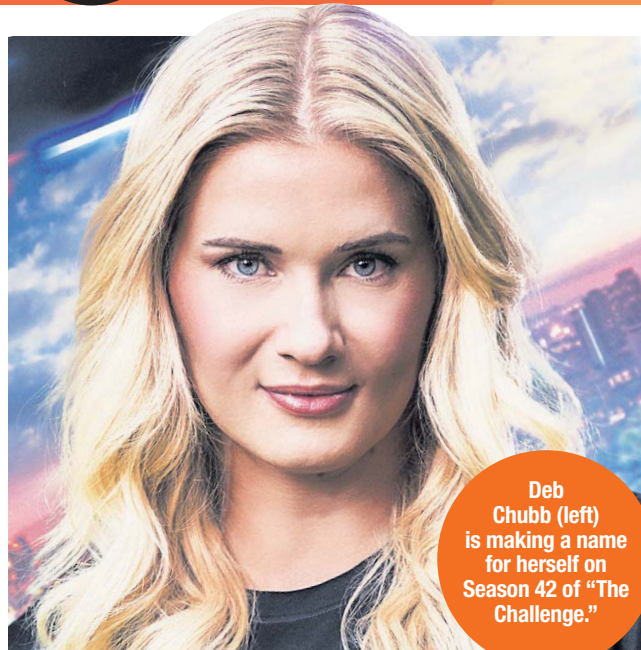
felt like the rug was pulled out from under us after the rules of the games were explained." Fitzgerald agreed with Deal: "There was no time to figure out the full repair for what had been fractured previously."

One person who could bring the trio of veterans together? "The Challenge" rookie and "Love Island USA" alum Deb Chubb, who could be the series' next breakout star.

Deal, Devenanzio, Fitzgerald, and Chubb hopped on a Zoom with DECIDER to talk about the season.

DECIDER: "The Challenge" is now on Paramount+, so everyone can swear now! Bananas, what was it like to have that freedom in your confessionals and beyond?

JOHNNY "BANANAS" DEVENANZIO: I'm stoked. Listen, I am so excited to be under the umbrella of a new mother ship. The changes and the additions Paramount+ has made to



Deb Chubb (left) is making a name for herself on Season 42 of "The Challenge."

the show are gonna have a very positive outcome. Swearing, obviously, being one of them [laughs]. I love my new mom and dad.

Tori and Michele, it warmed my heart to see you two hype up Deb before elimination in Episode 2. Do you think Deb has what it takes to be the show's next breakout star? I think so.

MICHELE FITZGERALD: Yeah, she is! She *is* a "Challenge" star. She went through the rookie gauntlet. If there will be

another season of "The Challenge"—when there will be another season—she will be on it.

TORI DEAL: I agree. She seemed so aloof and uninterested in competing at first [laughs]. Then, when she would actually go down in the sand, she'd kill it. I'm not going to spoil what she's good at, but you're going to be surprised. She comes across as non-intimidating and then performs really well at everything.

JB: Have you seen the movie "The Incredibles"? Baby Jack Jack? Yeah, that's Deb on compe-

tion days. She's a little ball of fire. Being competitive on "The Challenge" is easy, but Deb is totally herself and that's hard. She's eccentric. She doesn't give a shit. She's got the most unhinged personality. That's why she fits so well into our team, because we are all a bit deranged.

MF: What also sets Deb apart from the other rookies is that she didn't come in with any ego or something to prove. She didn't need her hand held. She would just adapt to the situation and try her best. She is such a great person to have on a team. She's also a great competitor without taking it too damn seriously. She is our ray of sunlight. We love her.

Deb, after all these kind words from the vets, how do you look back on your first experience on "The Challenge"?

DEB CHUBB: First of all, I can't believe it. I didn't really know much about my team mates going into the show. Then, after the show was over, I did my research and realized that it is crazy the team that I ended up on. I learned something from every one of them.

My rookie season was the best-case scenario. It was so much fun. I really impressed myself, which was one of the reasons I wanted to do the show. Now I'm like, "If I go back, I want to train beforehand, and really give it my all." I don't think I'd take anything any more seriously [laughs], but I would just have more "I'm here to compete" vibes.

2 SOMEBODY KNOWS SOMETHING

Monday 10 p.m., Freeform

True crime influencer Kara Robinson Chamberlain (right) dives into unsolved murders and missing persons cases in this new docuseries.



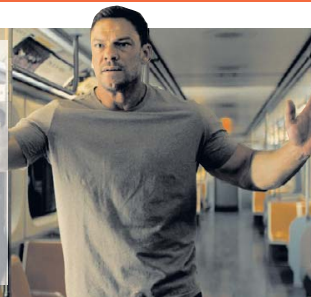
3 TRAVIS BARKER: LOUDER THAN FEAR

Thursday, Hulu

The new documentary delving into the life and career of Travis Barker (left) features appearances from the Blink-182 drummer's collaborators and loved ones.

4 REACHER

Wednesday, Prime Video
Season 4 of the hit action show starring Alan Ritchson (right) is based on the 13th book in author Lee Child's book series.



7 CAMP ROCK 3

Thursday 8 p.m., Disney Channel
16 years after "Camp Rock 2: The Final Jam" comes a new installment in the "Camp Rock" film franchise, this time, led by Liamani Segura and Malachi Barton (right).



5 THE REAL HOUSEWIVES ULTIMATE GIRLS TRIP: ROARING 20th

Sunday 9 p.m., Bravo
This nine-episode installment will feature seven Real Housewives taking on several cities across the country.

6 HONEST RENOVATIONS

Friday, The Roku Channel
Best friends Jessica Alba and Lizzy Mathis return to host Season 4 of their home improvement series, which features them helping families in New Jersey.



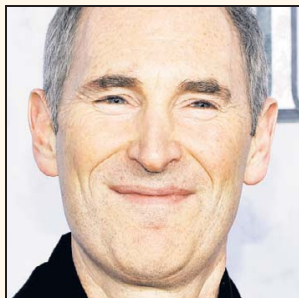
8 DON'T SAY GOOD LUCK

Friday, Netflix

In this new movie, Sunny Sandler (left) stars as a high schooler who lands the lead in her school's musical while navigating the tragic news that her mother (Melanie Lynskey) is sick again

PostBusiness

THE WEEK'S WINNERS



AMAZON

E-commerce giant joined an exclusive club by passing the \$3 trillion market-cap level. Investors don't mind that CEO Andy Jassy is ramping up AI spending.

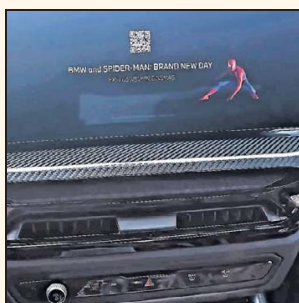
BURGER KING

US sales soar as customers embrace its revamped Whopper, while McDonald's suffers flailing growth.

JPMORGAN CHASE

Wall Street titan says it will invest \$750 billion through 2035 to help 500,000 Americans buy homes.

LOSERS



BMW

Luxury automaker infuriates owners with ads for the new "Spider-Man" movie that popped up on their dashboard screens.

MARK ZUCKERBERG

Meta CEO is dealt another court blow, this time in New Mexico where it was ordered to pay \$567 million to address kids' mental health.

UBS

Swiss bank once again violates anti-money-laundering law and is fined \$125 million for latest infractions.

'SIN' OF CENTRISM

Ellison 'confessional' in media-merger bid



CHARLES GASPARINO

WE live in strange times. They're so strange that when an apolitical media mogul buys a new property and wants to provide more centrist programming — reflecting attitudes of most Americans — he feels compelled to explain himself like a sinner in a confession booth.

David Ellison, the CEO of Paramount Skydance, is that "sinner" and if you read his op-ed in The New York Times this week, you can see his confessional for the apostasy of bucking conventional progressive norms in the mainstream media.

Because of his offenses against the progressive orthodoxy that dominates news and entertainment, Ellison's bid to merge PSKY with Warner Bros. Discovery is now being challenged on antitrust grounds by a dozen loony Democratic US state attorneys general, led by some dude in California that no one heard of until now.

Ellison makes the case in his Times op-ed that the only reasons these leftist AGs are suing is politics. They might lose a reliable cheerleader for their progressivism at CNN — the WBD cable news subsidiary Ellison wants to acquire — much the same way Ellison is rewriting the lefty script at the news network he currently controls, CBS.

'Trusted steward'

Or as Ellison astutely points out: "The issue is whether I can be trusted as a steward of Warner's CNN. There has been speculation about my politics, my loyalties, my intentions."

Based on the facts, it's hard to find fault in his analysis. First, if you know Ellison, you also know he's not some right-wing ideologue — a point he tried to drive home in the piece. If you're even a casual viewer of CBS, you would also know that under his leadership and through his appointment of heterodox though hardly right-wing journalist Bari Weiss to run CBS News, you would also know it's not now and never will be MAGA central.

If you don't believe it, go back and read some of Weiss' pieces on the is-



Peter Lavigne/NY Post

sues. Yes, she is staunchly pro-Israel and hates all forms of wokeism, but that puts her in line with just about everyone except these AGs, and much of the progressive media ecosystem.

This type of centrism isn't what the likes of California AG Rob Bonta, who is leading the case, is aiming for. His office counters that the case "resulted from clear-cut antitrust analysis" and is "necessary to protect competition and consumer choice." The federal judge in the case has already indicated the court "cannot accept Defendants' argument that the transaction will produce efficiencies in the streaming market."

But keep in mind that Bonta (like the Biden-appointed judge hearing the case) is a progressive and he's looking to burnish his lefty bona fi-

des, probably to run for governor in a state dominated by like progressives. What better way to do that than cry foul over some merger, including one that won easy passage through the Trump DOJ Antitrust Division?

As an added benefit, Bonta can point out how David Ellison's dad, Larry, the Oracle co-founder, and the president are pals. Maybe Trump will set the new agenda of the combined CBS-CNN?

That argument falls apart on so many levels. Why would Ellison risk alienating centrist viewers — the 70% of the country that's center-left and center-right — by running Trumpian-infused agitprop? More centrist programming might just work in a media business that has seen audience declines over its progressive leanings for years now.

Yet crying "Trump" to block this

deal is not nearly as weak as Bonta's legal argument. He wants people to believe that the Paramount-WBD combo will somehow rule the airwaves and force viewers to pay more for stuff they have been consuming for years — increasingly through Big Tech, and thus increasingly making Big Media rather small.

Bad for consumers?

The lawsuit is a joke on so many levels that I haven't seen a single antitrust expert — except the politicized ones in the AGs' offices — explain how these companies are about to smash the likes of Amazon, Apple, YouTube and all the other places offering content these days.

Maybe that's because these AGs are trying to make the case that the deal is bad for consumers because two pretty weak companies merged are stronger than if they remained on their own. True, they will be stronger, which is the point. Each reported earnings last week, with WBD missing on revenues and Paramount's profits sinking.

Dive deeper into their balance sheets and you see two companies withering from competition, not cutting prices, not hiring more stagehands, but in a long-term death spiral. Combine them and they have a chance to compete on price with streaming giant Netflix.

What's most absurd about this case is that if you take it on face value, there are actually US politicians with a degree of power who are to the left of the progressives in the European Union and the UK regulatory apparatus. Both have now greenlit the \$80 billion merger for the obvious reasons: Arguing antitrust power when you combine two weak companies displays real economic illiteracy.

I'm going to give Bonta and his wingmate in this action, our very own New York AG Tish James, their due: This lawsuit isn't about protecting consumers or the jobs of the creative community that are going away because of the industry's wonky economics. It's a politically savvy way of stopping David Ellison from bringing news to the center and exposing Americans to points of view on both sides, as opposed to tilting to the left, which has been a significant part of CBS and CNN's faltering business model for years.

Who knew that was such a crime?

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Esquire Bank, National Association
Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) Strategic Plan

The CRA regulations require a bank that has developed a Strategic Plan to publish Notice of the plan and solicit formal written public comment for at least a 30-day period. In conformance with this requirement, Esquire Bank, National Association (the "Bank") hereby provides notice to the public of its plan to submit a five (5) year CRA Strategic Plan to the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency ("OCC").

Written comments from the public concerning the Strategic Plan are encouraged. To obtain a copy of the Bank's Strategic Plan at no charge to the requesting party, Individuals may request a copy by mail or phone by contacting Bonnie Dougherty, Senior Vice President and Chief Lending Officer, 100 Jericho Quadrangle, Suite 100, Jericho NY 11753, (516) 535-2002. All written comments regarding the Strategic Plan should be directed to Ms. Bonnie Dougherty, Chief Lending Officer at the address listed above or via email at CRA.Strategic.Plan@esqbank.com

Comments and suggestions will be accepted until September 8, 2026, following which time the Strategic Plan will be submitted for approval to the OCC. The Bank will review all comments and incorporate suggestions into the Strategic plan at its discretion.

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Golf

LIV Golf New York
At Trump National Golf Club Bedminster; Bedminster, N.J.
Purse: \$20M; Yardage: 7,651; Par: 71

Third Round			
Joaquin Niemann	64-65-70	199	-14
Harold Varner III	69-67-65	201	-12
Lee Westwood	69-65-69	203	-10
Tom McKibbin	70-66-70	206	-7
Sergio Garcia	70-65-72	207	-6
An Byeong-hun	72-68-68	208	-5
Thomas Pieters	68-70-70	208	-5
Richard Bland	73-64-71	208	-5
Scott Vincent	69-68-72	209	-4
Lucas Herbert	66-71-73	210	-3
Paul Casey	70-67-73	210	-3
Song Young-han	72-70-68	210	-3
Ian Poulter	66-72-74	212	-1
Caleb Surraatt	76-69-69	213	E
Yosuke Asaji	70-69-74	213	E
Dustin Johnson	71-70-72	213	E
Charl Schwartzel	75-69-69	213	E
Abraham Ancer	71-72-73	213	E
Richard T. Lee	73-68-73	214	+1
Anirban Lahiri	74-67-73	214	+1
Branden Grace	73-69-72	214	+1
Lee Dai-han	71-71-72	214	+1
Victor Perez	73-72-70	215	+2
David Puig	71-75-69	215	+2
Marc Leishman	71-69-75	215	+2
Peter Uihlein	71-69-75	215	+2
Björn Hellgren	75-71-69	215	+2
Thomas Detry	77-69-69	215	+2
Laurie Canter	73-70-72	215	+2
Travis Smyth	71-71-73	215	+2
Charles Howell III	75-69-71	215	+2
Brendan Steele	68-74-71	216	+3
Jon Rahm	72-71-73	216	+3
Michael La Sasso	72-69-76	217	+4
Talor Gooch	74-68-75	217	+4
Tyrell Hatton	73-76-69	218	+5
Carlos Oza	71-71-76	218	+5
Joselo Ballester	71-72-75	218	+5
Martin Vorster	74-70-75	219	+6
Cameron Smith	75-72-72	219	+6
Bryson DeChambeau	76-74-70	220	+7
Juan Muñoz	74-71-76	221	+8
Dean Burmester	71-75-75	221	+8
Miguel Tabuena	73-75-73	221	+8
Kim Min-kyu	74-71-78	223	+10
Matthew Wolff	72-74-77	223	+10
Adrian Meronk	75-72-76	223	+10
Anthony Kim	75-76-72	223	+10
Mun Do-yeob	76-73-74	223	+10
Bubba Watson	69-77-78	224	+11
Martin Kaymer	74-80-70	224	+11
Cameron Tringale	74-70-80	224	+11
Jason Kokrak	79-75-72	226	+13
Ben Campbell	76-78-72	226	+13
Sam Horsfield	77-75-72	227	+14
Graeme McDowell	80-74-77	231	+18
Luis Masaveu Rocal	77-76-81	234	+21

PGA Tour- Wyndham Championship
At Sedgfield Country Club; Greensboro, N.C.; Purse: \$8.5 million;
Yardage: 7,131; Par: 70

Third Round			
Michael Brennan	66-65-63	194	-16
Bea Hossler	61-67-66	194	-16
Tom Kim	65-67-63	195	-15
Alex Noren	66-65-65	196	-14
Alex Smalley	67-64-65	196	-14
Davis Thompson	64-68-65	197	-13
Kevin Yu	65-68-65	198	-12
Nicolas Echavarria	68-69-62	199	-11
Harry Hall	69-66-64	199	-11
Jordan L. Smith	65-64-70	199	-11
Hideki Matsuyama	65-69-66	200	-10
David Skins	66-65-69	200	-10
Sahithi Theegala	62-69-69	200	-10
Erik Van Rooyen	69-65-66	200	-10
Zachary Bauchou	64-69-68	201	-9
Billy Horschel	65-66-70	201	-9
Benjamin James	62-67-72	201	-9
Jackson Koivun	67-68-66	201	-9
Kevin Roy	68-66-67	201	-9
Matt Wallace	71-66-64	201	-9
Tyler Collet	67-66-69	202	-8
Joel Dahmen	68-66-68	202	-8
Rico Hoey	66-65-71	202	-8
Sungjae Im	67-68-67	202	-8
Ben Kohles	66-71-65	202	-8
Denny McCarthy	64-68-70	202	-8
Chandler Phillips	67-67-68	202	-8
Webb Simpson	70-67-65	202	-8
Jordan Spieth	68-69-65	202	-8
Jackson Suber	67-65-70	202	-8
Justin Thomas	66-70-66	202	-8
Christiaan Bezuidenhout	68-69-66	203	-7
Rafael Campos	65-69-69	203	-7
Eric Cole	63-69-71	203	-7
Austin Eckroat	67-68-68	203	-7
Doug Ghim	64-67-72	203	-7
Andrew Novak	68-68-67	203	-7
Brandt Snedeker	65-70-68	203	-7
Hayden Springer	64-69-70	203	-7
Bud Cauley	65-70-69	204	-6
Patrick Fishburn	68-68-68	204	-6
Joe Highsmith	67-67-70	204	-6
Michael Kim	67-68-69	204	-6
Justin Lower	69-67-68	204	-6
Thorbjørn Olesen	69-67-68	204	-6
John Parry	66-70-68	204	-6
Chad Ramey	66-66-72	204	-6
Austin Smotherman	66-71-67	204	-6
Kevin Streelman	69-66-69	204	-6
Ricky Castillo	67-68-70	205	-5
Lee Hodges	66-70-69	205	-5
Tom Hoge	65-67-73	205	-5
Patton Kizzire	69-68-68	205	-5
Andrew Putnam	69-68-68	205	-5
Aaron Rai	69-67-69	205	-5
Neal Shipley	69-67-69	205	-5
Kris Ventura	69-67-69	205	-5

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East	W	L	Pct.	GB
Indiana	20	12	.625	—
Atlanta	19	12	.613	½
Washington	18	12	.600	1
Liberty	19	13	.594	1
Chicago	12	20	.375	8
Toronto	10	21	.323	9½
Connecticut	8	23	.258	11½

West	W	L	Pct.	GB
Minnesota	26	7	.788	—
Golden State	22	9	.710	3
Las Vegas	22	10	.688	3½
Dallas	19	13	.594	6½
Portland	13	19	.406	12½
Los Angeles	12	18	.400	12½
Phoenix	12	21	.364	14
Seattle	6	28	.176	20½

Saturday

Minnesota 98, Las Vegas 87
Indiana 90, Chicago 86
Portland 100, Seattle 93
Sunday
Las Vegas at Liberty, 12:30pm
Phoenix at Washington, 3pm
Dallas at Minnesota, 3:30pm
Golden State at Los Angeles, 7pm

Monday

Toronto at Atlanta, 8pm
Chicago at Seattle, 10pm

Tennis

ATP National Bank Open

At IGA Stadium; Montreal; Purse: \$9,415,725; Surface: Hardcourt outdoor; (seedings in parentheses):
Men's Singles - Round of 16
Luciano Darderi (19), Italy, def. Nuno Borges, Portugal, 4-6, 6-3, 7-5.
Brandon Nakashima (28), United States, def. Arthur Rinderknech (23), France, 7-6 (4), 5-7, 7-5.
Rafael Jodar (20), Spain, def. Jiri Lehecka (8), Czechia, 6-3, 6-3.
Arthur Fils (18), France, def. Cameron Norrie, Britain, 6-2, 7-6 (8).
Men's Doubles - Round of 16
Daniil Medvedev, Russia, and Fabian Marozsan, Hungary, def. Edouard Roger-Vasselin, France, and Hugo Nys, Monaco, 7-6 (5), 6-4.
Guido Andreozzi, Argentina, and Manuel Guinard (7), France, def. Lorenzo Musetti and Matteo Arnaldi, Italy, 6-3, 6-4.
Harri Heliouaara, Finland, and Henry Patten (1), Britain, def. Andre Goransson, Sweden, and Casper Ruud, Norway, 6-4, 7-6 (6).
Alexis Galareme and Duncan Chan, Canada, def. Kevin Krawietz, Germany, and Pierre-Hugues Herbert (8), France, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (3).

WTA National Bank Open

At Sobeys Stadium; Toronto; Purse: \$7,433,076; Surface: Hardcourt outdoor; Saturday (seedings in parentheses):
Women's Singles - Round of 16
Iga Swiatek (7), Poland, def. Marta Kostyuk (10), Ukraine, 3-6, 6-1, 6-2.
Diana Shnaider (15), Russia, def. Jessica Pegula (3), United States, 6-3, 6-3.
Ekaterina Alexandrova (16), Russia, def. Aryna Sabalenka (1), Belarus, 7-6 (3), 4-6, 6-4.
Elina Svitolina (9), Ukraine, def. Amanda Anisimova (8), United States, 6-2, 6-4.
Women's Doubles - Round of 16
Demi Schuurs, Netherlands, and Ellen Perez (7), Australia, def. Asia Muhammad, United States, and Fanny Stollar, Hungary, 6-4, 6-2.
Ann Li, United States, and Clara Tauson, Denmark, def. Ingrid Neel, Estonia, and Giuliana Olmos, Mexico, 4-6, 7-6 (3), 11-9.
Sara Errani, Italy, and Nicole Melichar-Martinez (3), United States, def. Miyu (1994) Kato, Japan, and Liudmila Samsonova, Russia, 6-2, 6-2.
Hsieh Su-wei, Taiwan, and Jelena Ostapenko (5), Latvia, def. Ulrikke Eikeri, Norway, and Quinn Gleason, United States, 6-4, 7-6 (1).
Storm Hunter, Australia, and Desirae Krawczyk, United States, def. Hao-Ching Chan, Taiwan, and Maya Joint, Australia, 6-2, 6-2.
Zhang Shuai, China, and Katerina Sinikova (1), Czechia, def. Caty McNally and Coco Gauff, United States, 6-0, 6-4.
Elise Mertens, Belgium, and Diana Shnaider (6), Russia, def. Xinyu Jiang, China, and Fang-Hsien Wu, Taiwan, 6-3, 6-3.

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Saratoga

Analysis by Vic Cangialosi

Lock of
the Day

Frolicking (1st)
Lock Record: 10 for 22 (45%)
Meet Record: 59/237 \$409.62

1 6 fur; \$115,000; mdn; 3up(f)

Whitney weekend comes to a close. 11 races on the Sunday card. **FROLICKING** can move forward for Brad Cox in the opener. Debuted a close 2nd behind a next out winner at Churchill last September. 1st time lasix. **POISE** is 0 for 3 but a clear 2nd last out. And Alvarado rides the debuting **EPISODIC**, an Uncle Mo filly, for Juddmonte/Mott.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Glow of a Rose(M),122	F Prat	3-x-x	Ward	2-1
2	Frolicking(M),122	I Ortiz, Jr	2-x-x	Cox	9-5
3	Poise(L),122	J Ortiz	2-4-3	Asmussen	2-1
4	Chestnut(L),122	M Franco	2-2-x	Abreu	6-1
5	Episodic(M),122	J Alvarado	x-x-x	Mott	8-1

2 1 1/16 miles(T); \$115,000; mdn; 3up

On the turf to back-end the double. **QUICK PICK** (Walden/Irad/Oscar Performance) is a live 1st timer. **COMMITMENT FUND** debuted a 1/2 length short. Choice if we're off turf. **OKEFENOKEE** Close 3rd, then 3 lengths shy stretching to this distance. **PAY THE PIPER** and **DEMOCRACY DEFENDER** both exit 3rd place finishes at the distance.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Housing Market(FR)(M),121	F Prat	x-x-x	C Brown	7-2
2	Feline Curious(L),121	J Velazquez	5-2-2	Danner	9-2
3	Pay the Piper(L),121	M Franco	3-9-5	C Brown	3-1
4	Quick Pick(M),121	I Ortiz, Jr	x-x-x	Walden	5-2
5	Democracy Defender(L),121	J Ortiz	3-6-2	Abreu	4-1
6	Okefenokee(L),121	D Davis	7-3-6	Morley	6-1
7	Veblen(M),121	J Alvarado	x-x-x	Mott	7-2
8	Sidearm(L),126	K Carmouche	5-2-3	Barker	6-1
9	Commitment Fund(L),121	F Prat	2-x-x	C Brown	8-5

3 1 mile; \$43,000; cfm(\$20,000); 3up(f)

With 2 wins from 22 starts, **BELLE CHERIE** is a tough sell. But she was an energetic 2nd racing 7/8. Edge, stretching a furlong, 2nd off the layoff. **ROYAL BOBBIE** was 2nd at this distance then 4th making 2 turns. Moves lower for Rice; J Ortiz on; blinkers off. **KAREY** picked up her 2nd win from 12 starts. Competitively spotted; same distance.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Hauntress(L),126	J Lezcano	4-9-2	Arriaga	20-1
2	Bobby Jean(L),126	J Alvarado	8-6-7	Hennig	5-1
3	Royal Bobbie(L),126	J Ortiz	4-2-3	Rice	2-1
4	Oscar Bound(L),121	S Bridgmohan	7-6-6	Giddings	8-1
5	Calling an Audible(L),126	T Gaffalione	5-2-3	Barker	12-1
6	Cararra(L),126	R Santana, Jr	4-7-4	Baker	6-1
7	Caradise(L),121	R Gutierrez	4-7-5	Friedman	30-1
8	That's the fact(Jack)(L),126	J Rodriguez	5-1-7	Schettino	15-1
9	Karey(L),121	C Elliott	1-2-3	Kantarmaci	8-1
10	Belle Cherie(L),126	F Prat	2-4-1	Maker	4-1
11	Scotalloo(L),126	R Santana, Jr	6-7-3	Quiroz	20-1

4 6 1/2 fur; \$52,000; mdn cfm(\$35,000); 3up

Changes for **MR MASHIGINA** after a debut dud. Turf to dirt and lower for Chad Brown. 1st time gelding; 1st time lasix; Prat on; blinkers on. **JUST CLASSIC** hasn't raced in 15 months. Midpack 5th in the Texas Derby prior to the extended break. Softly spotted for return. Irad rides for Joe Sharp. DePaz takes **BAKUTO** lower after getting outrun twice. Better here. **CAPT FLUFF N STUFF** Close 3rd with similar. Carmouche on...blinkers on.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Classic Rock(L),126	R Santana, Jr	3-6-x	Ochoa	10-1
2	Main Thing(M),122	T Gaffalione	x-x-x	Beckman	7-2
3	Bakuto(L),122	J Rodriguez	5-7-2	De Paz	5-1
4	Holy Dancer(L),126	K Davis	4-5-6	Zito	15-1
5	Nordic Fyre(L),126	M Franco	5-5-3	James Bond	8-1
6	Just Classic(L),126	I Ortiz, Jr	5-3-10	Sharp	2-1
7	Capt Fluff N Stuff(L),126	K Carmouche	3-4-6	Gargan	9-2
8	Mr. Mashigina(M),122	F Prat	6-x-x	C Brown	8-1

5 5 1/2 fur(T); \$115,000; mdn; 2YO(f)

Two-year-old fillies on the turf. **CYBER CLOUD** leads the gate 1st time for Hennig. Prat on the Cyberknife gray. **ALL STAR LEIGH** has a race under her. Last of 10 before rallying for 2nd money. Runs same distance. **KINBOSHI** (Handal/Davis/Honest Mischief), **DEUCE DANCER** (Abreu/Franco/Army Mule) and **CARPET CITY** (McPeck/Irad Maximus Mischief) are 3 more dangerous debuters.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Fire Angel,123	R Santana, Jr	6-x-x	Weaver	10-1

2	Kinboshi,123	D Davis	x-x-x	Handal	15-1
3	Cyber Cloud,123	F Prat	x-x-x	Hennig	6-1
4	Saint Dymphna,123	T Gaffalione	5-7-x	Green	6-1
5	Nater Tot,123	J Rodriguez	x-x-x	Atras	20-1
6	Carpet City,123	I Ortiz, Jr	x-x-x	McPeck	8-1
7	Buccherita,123	K Davis	x-x-x	Quick	20-1
8	All Star Leigh,123	J Ortiz	2-x-x	A Dutrow	5-2
9	Deuce Dancer,123	M Franco	x-x-x	Abreu	9-2
10	Leyton Orient,123	J Alvarado	x-x-x	LaRose	10-1
11	The Paper Lady,123	J Lezcano	x-x-x	Ferraro	20-1
12	Comets Choice,123	J Castellano	8-x-x	Terranova II	30-1
13	Sweet Grace,123	C Elliott	5-x-x	Ryerson	12-1
14	Beach Life,123	I Ortiz, Jr	4-3-x	Pletcher	5-1
15	Champagne in Paris,123	J Rodriguez	10-x-x	Giddings	30-1
16	Night Sky,123	J Castellano	x-x-x	Delgado	12-1

6 1 mile(T); \$55,000; cfm(\$35,000); 3up

A breather for **PRINTERS ALLEY** after losing by a 1/2 dozen at Gulfstream in March. 0 for 3 on turf but a length short racing for 50k at this distance at Saratoga last summer. Blinkers off. **PAULS RECOVERY** MTO. Broke maiden by 3+ in the slop. **JETER** makes grass debut for Wilkes. 1 for 3 on dirt. Franco on the wildcard. **CAPRICIOUS OUTCOME** moved lower and responded, graduating on his 4th attempt. Modestly spotted for Chad Brown.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Capricious Outcome(L),126	F Prat	1-4-4	C Brown	5-2
2	Printer's Alley(L),126	T Gaffalione	6-3-4	Sisterson	9-2
3	Take a Stance(L),121	J Castellano	10-3-4	Nevin	15-1
4	Kings Dancer(L),121	C Elliott	10-7-1	Dixon	30-1
5	Lawyer Mason(L),121	D Davis	9-8-4	Morley	10-1
6	Funky See Funky Do(L),121	J Rodriguez	1-7-10	Summers	15-1
7	Exhibition Only(L),121	I Ortiz, Jr	7-6-9	Rodriguez	10-1
8	Royal Browne(L),126	J Ortiz	6-2-6	Abreu	6-1
9	Jeter(L),121	M Franco	5-1-7	Wilkes	12-1
10	I Can See That(L),126	R Santana, Jr	3-1-3	Levine	10-1
11	Vintage Vino(L),126	K Carmouche	5-5-8	Rodriguez	5-1
12	Paul's Recovery(L),121	M Franco	3-1-4	Rice	2-1

7 6 1/2 fur; \$71,000; mdn cfm(\$85,000); 3up(f)

ROSE TO RICHES made dirt debut at this distance and ran home 3 lengths short. Prat stays on; so do we. Moves lower. So does **IMMACULATE MOON**. Neighborhood 4th, distant 6th here last year. May need a race. 1st time lasix; 1st time Irad. **LIL TIPS** is 0 for 6 but 2nd, then 3rd last pair.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Immaculate Moon(M),122	I Ortiz, Jr	6-4-x	Gargan	5-2
2	Pulling Threads(L),122	J Alvarado	9-4-4	Sharp	10-1
3	Red Beach(L),122	T Gaffalione	10-x-x	James Bond	20-1
4	Chart the Course(L),122	D Davis	9-x-x	Casse	8-1
5	Rose to Riches(L),122	F Prat	4-5-x	C Brown	3-1
6	Cara Fiore(L),122	J Rodriguez	4-7-2	Ward	9-2
7	Lil Tippy(L),122	M Franco	3-2-9	Rice	3-1
8	M Bs Melanie Cares(L),122	R Santana, Jr	5-x-x	Ochoa	15-1

8 5 1/2 fur(T); \$300,000; Troy; 3up

The feature is the Grade 2 Troy. **DANCING BUCK** danced home a rusty 6th racing off the layoff in the Ashley T Cole. Won a 150k wire-to-wire prior to the break. Value's up; J Ortiz up. **TWENTY SIX BLACK** Up to win the Harvey Pack here last month. 2nd in last years Troy. M/L fave in this year's edition. **JOHN THE BEER MAN** was 3rd, only 3/4 short in the Grade 1 Jaipur. Winner previous 3 starts. Rebound chance. **WAROLO** beat Twenty Six Black in May then Dancing Buck in the Cole. Must be considered. **DONCHO** enters off a pair of stake wins, the latest in a 100k at Indiana. Irad up.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Dancing Buck,124	J Ortiz	6-1-4	Nevin	15-1
2	Twenty Six Black,124	M Franco	1-4-2	De Paz	5-2
3	Doncho,124	I Ortiz, Jr	1-1-13	Lovell	3-1
4	Coppola,124	T Gaffalione	3-3-2	C Martin	20-1
5	Waralo,124	J Lezcano	1-1-2	Englehart	6-1
6	John the Beer Man,124	K Carmouche	3-1-1	Atras	7-2
7	Works for Me,124	F Prat	9-1-5	Lee	8-1
8	Rezasrolex,124	J Alvarado	1-1-10	Orseno	10-1

9 Determined Kingdom,124 R Santana, Jr 1-1-6 Trombetta 15-1

9 7 fur; \$105,000; alw; 3up

We have Prat winning his 5th on the day with **MO FOR THE KING**. Close 3rd twice here this summer. Finished well; extra furlong may put him over the top. **ONEBIGBEAUTIFULBILL** was a last-to-first debut winner on the 5th of July. Should get the longer distance. Irad replaces Prat. **MAX MONEY** loads off a handy gate-to-wire optional claiming win. Tough spot holding off top pair. **BLUE ROOF BEAU** debuted with a W as well. Like Onebigbeautifulbill, he should have no issues with the extra furlong.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Tricky Business(L),122	M Franco	5-4-1	Weaver	5-1
2	Mo for the King(L),126	F Prat	3-3-6	Falcone	5-2
3	Onebigbeautifulbill(L),122	I Ortiz, Jr	1-x-x	Cox	7-2
4	Blue Roof Beau(L),122	J Lezcano	1-x-x	Englehart	6-1
5	Caddiemaster(L),126	J Ortiz	1-2-6	Rice	12-1
6	Max Money(L),122	R Santana, Jr	1-6-1	Maker	4-1
7	Sorority Prank(L),126	D Davis	1-1-2	Englehart	12-1
8	Empire Sky(L),126	J Hernandez	1-3-7	Kirby	12-1
9	Sebastianthe First(L),126	R Gutierrez	9-1-4	Delgado	30-1

10 1 1/16 miles(T); \$78,000; alw; 3up

GUN BARREL CITY moved lower and stormed from last of 9 to win at this distance. Pletcher's gelding needs it fast up front. **SEQUENTIAL** MTO. **PINELAND** is 2 of 21 but a neck shy racing this distance at Delaware in June. Castellano picks up the mount. And **HARD CIRCLE** missed by a neck tackling comparable company. Maker gets Prat to seal the deal.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	The Paddock Pastor(L),126	J Ortiz	7-2-3	Green	8-1
2	Gun Barrel City(L),126	M Franco	1-4-8	Pletcher	6-1
3	Outsource(L),126	R Santana, Jr	2-4-6	Morley	10-1
4	Pineland(L),126	J Castellano	6-2-10	Schultz	8-1
5	Ciao Chuck(L),126	I Ortiz, Jr	7-3-4	Abreu	7-2
6	Silver Front(L),126	A Chavez	2-1-2	Meyers	30-1
7	Back in the Saddle(L),126	C Elliott	3-1-4	Goberdhan	50-1
8	Hard Circle(L),126	F Prat	2-4-1	Maker	9-2
9	English Castle(L),126	J Rodriguez	1-8-7	De Paz	10-1
10	Blast Furnace(L),126	T Gaffalione	4-9-9	Maker	6-1
11	Maximum Promise(L),126	S Gonzalez	3-4-4	Kantarmaci	12-1
12	Chips and Fish(L),121	J Lezcano	3-6-5	Arriaga	15-1
13	Sequential(L),126	Rider TBA	10-1-2	Noda	3-1
14	Fever Night(L),126	J Lezcano	1-1-5	Rice	5-1

11 5 1/2 fur(T); \$120,000; alw; 3up

Wide open in the weekend. Clement's **GRUNGE** was 3rd, a neck back of Sharp's **BOSUN** who was 2nd here last month. **SHIRLS SOUL TOWN** Up late to win his debut by a 1/2 length. Competitively spotted for Rice. **AFTER TAXES** Stalker has won 2 in a row. Tough spot outkicking this crew. **BOSTONIAN** makes turf debut for Ward after going 5 for 7 on dirt.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	After Taxes(IRE)(L),126	D Davis	1-1-7	B Brown	8-1
2	Brightline Bullet(L),126	M Franco	10-1-3	Clement	10-1
3	Bostonian(L),126	F Prat	1-6-8	Ward	8-1
4	Pair of Socks(L),126	C Elliott	5-2-3	Ferraro	20-1
5	Mission Improbable(L),126	R Santana, Jr	4-1-2	Brisset	6-1
6	Shirl's Soul Town(L),126	I Ortiz, Jr	1-x-x	Rice	9-2
7	Grunge(L),122	J Rodriguez	3-4-1	Clement	9-2
8	Into Diamonds(L),126	T Gaffalione	4-3-2	Casse	15-1
9	Bosun(L),126	J Ortiz	2-4-6	Sharp	7-2
10	Ortley Avenue(IRE)(L),126	J Castellano	7-2-2	Weaver	6-1

PLAY OF THE DAY

Nothing from the debuting Iron Confessor (17-1) or the aging White Abarrio (10-1). Remember Mamba (8-5) was a forgettable 4th. Loss of \$54.

For Sunday, play \$30 to win on Frolicking in Race 1 and \$4 across the board on Mr. Mashigina in Race 4 and Dancing Buck in Race 8.

— Vic Cangialosi

Saratoga Results

FIRST-6½ fur; \$115,000; mdn spl wt; 2YO
7 Gaudreau (Prat) 6.82 4.90 3.42
2 Coach Pope (Velazquez) 9.12 6.38
1 U.S.S. Valor (Gaffalione) 3.80
Scr: Coach's Pals
● \$1 Exacta (7-2) \$42.13 ● \$0.1 Superfecta (7-2-1-3) \$70.29 ● \$0.5 Trifecta (7-2-1) \$84.43

SECOND-6½ fur; \$115,000; mdn spl wt; 2YO
5 Admiralty (Ortiz) 7.74 4.46 3.00
8 Mystrix (Saez) 4.32 3.02
10 Implied Open (Franco)
● \$1 Double (7-5) \$17.87 ● \$1 Exacta (5-8) \$14.41 ● \$0.5 Trifecta (5-8-10) \$30.67

THIRD-1 mile 1 fur; \$130,000; alw; 4up
1 San Sro (Gaffalione) 22.46 8.24 3.80
6 Yo Daddy (Santana,Jr.) 5.96 3.20
3 Full Screen (Ortiz) 2.50
Scr: Bramito
● \$1 Double (5-1) \$59.62 ● \$1 Exacta (1-6) \$48.05 ● \$0.5 Trifecta (1-6-3) \$45.80

FOURTH-1 1/16 mile; \$120,000; alw; 3upf
7 SIWthhndw (Alvrd) 3.94 3.94 2.74
4 Hand Over Heart (Davis) 4.48 3.68
6 Scratch It (Franco) 4.06
Scr: Consumer Sentiment, Hidden Rose, Soundbite, Fast and Frisky
● \$1 Double (1-4) \$28.60 ● \$1 Double (1-7) \$26.60 ● \$1 Exacta (4-7) \$8.76 ● \$1 Exacta (7-4) \$8.59 ● \$0.5 Trifecta (4-7-6) \$20.09 ● \$0.5 Trifecta (7-4-6) \$17.76

Winner picked by Vic C

FIFTH-7 fur; \$120,000; alc; 3up
7 Tagermeen (Ortiz) 7.46 4.10 2.98
8 Fact (Franco) 3.96 2.88
2 Rock Music (Ortiz,Jr.) 3.02
Scr: Ago, Princip
● \$1 Double (4-7) \$9.35 ● \$1 Double (7-7) \$6.89 ● \$1 Exacta (7-8) \$13.92 ● \$0.5 Trifecta (7-8-2) \$28.25

SIXTH-6½ fur; \$115,000; mdn spl wt; 2YO F
9 Summr Strlt (Ortiz) 33.76 14.28 8.74
6 Aerial Affair (Santana,Jr.) 9.14 6.24
10 Joy of Life (Alvarado) 8.06
Scr: Noa Begorah, Violet the Ultra
● \$1 Double (7-9) \$47.95 ● \$1 Exacta (9-6) \$110.79 ● \$0.5 Trifecta (9-6-10) \$609.01

Winner picked by Vic C

SEVENTH-1 mile 3 fur; \$120,000; alw; 3up
10 Il Siciliano (Saez) 14.76 6.74 4.34
3 Greystone (Ortiz) 9.20 4.80
5 Iron Sight (Prat) 2.96
Scr: Sharp Spark, Magnanimous Max, Castle Chaos, Noble Factor
● \$1 Double (9-10) \$161.86 ● \$1 Exacta (10-3) \$80.20 ● \$0.5 Trifecta (10-3-5) \$146.57

EIGHTH-1 1/16 mile; \$115,000; mdn; 2YO
4 Oscar (Gaffalione) 6.84 3.86 3.30
11 Bold Leadership (Ortiz) 4.80 3.38
3 Mo Misery (Alvarado) 10.20
Scr: AndheRunners, Surety, RevenueStream
● \$1 Double (10-4) \$32.30 ● \$1 Exacta (4-11) \$15.04 ● \$0.5 Trifecta (4-11-3) \$164.57 ● \$1 Consolation Double (10-12) \$7.09

Exacta picked by Vic C

NINTH-7 fur; \$500,000; Test; 3YO F
X Explora (Prat) 5.74 3.82 2.80
2 Peter's Bar (Franco) 6.12 4.40
5 Goodall (Velazquez) 6.14
● \$1 Double (4-7) \$11.77 ● \$1 Exacta (7-2) \$21.17 ● \$0.5 Trifecta (7-2-5) \$81.01

TENTH-1 mile; \$750,000; Fourstar dave; 3up
5 Dtrmnstc (Crmch) 5.22 3.78 2.62
1 Mt Bago (Saez) 12.26 6.02
3 Zulu Kingdom (IRE) (Prat) 3.02
Scr: Glaxo
● \$1 Daily Double (7-5) \$10.37 ● \$1 Exacta (5-2) \$30.45 ● \$0.1 Superfecta (5-2-3-1) \$23.64 ● \$0.5 Trifecta (5-2-3) \$40.71

ELEVENTH-1 3/16m; \$750,000; SrtgArby; 3Y
6 Glacus (GB) (Saez) 21.24 8.46 5.68
10 West End Kid (Prat) 3.74 3.22
4 Title Role (GB) (Velazquez) 3.56
Scr: Bottas, Pacific Avenue (IRE)
● \$1 Pick 3 (7-5-6) \$128.78 ● \$0.5 Pick 4 (4/7/8/12-7-4/5-6) \$176.30 ● \$0.5 Pick 5 (10-4/7/8/12-7-4/5-6) \$1282.11 ● \$1 Daily Double (5-6) \$33.65 ● \$1 Exact

AL Standings

East	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Tampa Bay	70	46	.603	—	—	8-2	W-5	41-18	29-28
Yankees	66	51	.564	4½	+7	5-5	W-2	29-25	37-26
Boston	64	52	.552	6	+5½	9-1	L-1	29-30	35-22
Baltimore	56	61	.479	14½	3	4-6	L-3	32-30	24-31
Toronto	56	62	.475	15	3½	7-3	W-2	28-31	28-31

Central	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Chicago	60	56	.517	—	—	5-5	W-1	35-22	25-34
Cleveland	58	60	.492	3	1½	3-7	L-1	28-31	30-29
Minnesota	58	60	.492	3	1½	4-6	L-1	30-27	28-33
Detroit	57	60	.487	3½	2	7-3	W-1	30-27	27-33
Kansas City	49	69	.415	12	10½	4-6	W-1	29-29	20-40

West	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Houston	60	58	.508	—	—	7-3	L-1	30-29	30-29
Texas	59	58	.504	½	—	4-6	W-4	32-26	27-32
Seattle	56	62	.475	4	3½	3-7	L-3	33-28	23-34
Athletics	46	71	.393	13½	13	1-9	W-1	21-36	25-35
Los Angeles	45	72	.385	14½	14	3-7	L-1	25-33	20-39

*WGB: Games behind third-place team in wild-card race

Saturday

Yankees 5, Atlanta 4
Miami 7, L.A. Angels 0
Athletics 7, Boston 3
Kansas City 6, Cubs 3
Milwaukee 4, Minnesota 3
San Diego 3, Houston 2
Detroit 8, San Francisco 0
Texas 5, Baltimore 1
Toronto 7, Philadelphia 5, 11 inn.
White Sox 6, Cleveland 3
Tampa Bay 3, Seattle 2
Sunday
Atlanta at Yankees, 1:35
Athletics at Boston, 1:35

Toronto at Philadelphia, 1:35
L.A. Angels at Miami, 1:40
Cubs at Kansas City, 2:10
Cleveland at White Sox, 2:10
Minnesota at Milwaukee, 2:10
Baltimore at Texas, 2:35
Detroit at San Francisco, 4:05
Tampa Bay at Seattle, 4:10
Houston at San Diego, 8:20
Monday
Boston at Toronto, 7:07
Baltimore at Minnesota, 7:40
Texas at L.A. Angels, 9:38
Tampa Bay at Athletics, 9:40
Houston at San Francisco, 9:45
Kansas City at L.A. Dodgers, 10:10

NL Standings

East	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Atlanta	70	47	.598	—	—	8-2	L-2	39-20	31-27
Philadelphia	62	56	.525	8½	—	5-5	L-2	31-30	31-26
Miami	59	59	.500	11½	3	5-5	W-1	35-24	24-35
Washington	58	61	.487	13	4½	3-7	W-2	25-34	33-27
Mets	51	67	.432	19½	11	5-5	L-1	25-34	26-33

Central	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Milwaukee	73	44	.624	—	—	6-4	W-1	40-22	33-22
Chicago	68	50	.576	5½	+6	7-3	L-1	35-24	33-26
St. Louis	58	59	.496	15	3½	5-5	L-1	29-33	29-26
Pittsburgh	58	61	.487	16	4½	3-7	W-1	30-29	28-32
Cincinnati	56	60	.483	16½	5	6-4	L-2	29-31	27-29

West	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Los Angeles	70	47	.598	—	—	3-7	W-1	33-23	37-24
Arizona	62	56	.525	8½	—	6-4	L-1	34-25	28-31
San Diego	61	57	.517	9½	1	6-4	W-1	33-26	28-31
San Francisco	49	68	.419	21	12½	4-6	L-1	27-28	22-40
Colorado	46	71	.393	24	15½	4-6	W-1	27-32	19-39

*WGB: Games behind third-place team in wild-card race

Saturday

Yankees 5, Atlanta 4
Pittsburgh 9, Mets 0
Miami 7, L.A. Angels 0
Washington 8, Cincinnati 2
Kansas City 6, Cubs 3
Milwaukee 4, Minnesota 3
San Diego 3, Houston 2
Detroit 8, San Francisco 0
Toronto 7, Philadelphia 5, 11 inn.
Colorado 8, St. Louis 6
L.A. Dodgers 2, Arizona 1, 10 inn.
Sunday
Atlanta at Yankees, 1:35
Mets at Pittsburgh, 1:35

Cincinnati at Washington, 12:15
Toronto at Philadelphia, 1:35
L.A. Angels at Miami, 1:40
Cubs at Kansas City, 2:10
Minnesota at Milwaukee, 2:10
Colorado at St. Louis, 2:15
Detroit at San Francisco, 4:05
L.A. Dodgers at Arizona, 4:10
Houston at San Diego, 8:20
Monday
Mets at Atlanta, 7:15
Philadelphia at St. Louis, 7:45
Colorado at Arizona, 9:40
Milwaukee at San Diego, 9:40
Houston at San Francisco, 9:45
Kansas City at L.A. Dodgers, 10:10

Yankees 5, Braves 4

Atlanta	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Baldwin c	5	0	1	0	0	1	.272
Acuña dh	4	1	1	1	0	0	.247
Olson 1b	4	0	0	0	0	2	.267
Harris cf	4	0	1	0	0	0	.291
Albies 2b	4	0	1	0	0	0	.259
Dubón lf	4	1	1	0	0	1	.268
Yastrzemski rf	3	2	1	1	1	1	.229
Riley 3b	4	0	1	0	0	3	.222
Jarvis ss	3	0	1	1	0	2	.242
Smith ph	1	0	1	1	0	0	.270
Thomas pr	0	0	0	0	0	0	.228
Totals	36	4	9	4	1	10	

Yankees	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Goldschmidt 1b	3	0	1	0	1	1	.247
Ramos lf	4	0	0	0	0	2	.259
Rice dh	4	1	1	1	0	1	.260
Rosario 3b	3	0	0	0	0	0	.231
McMahon 3b	1	0	0	0	0	1	.217
Grisham cf	4	1	1	0	0	3	.210
Lombard ss	3	2	2	1	1	1	.385
Jones rf	3	1	2	2	1	0	.217
Caballero 2b	3	0	0	0	1	3	.242
Wells c	2	0	1	0	0	1	.173
Totals	30	5	8	4	4	13	

Atlanta	000	020	011	—	4	9	0
Yankees	010	020	011x	—	5	8	0

LOB: Atlanta 6, New York 6. 2B: Albies (22), Dubón (23), Yastrzemski (14), Grisham (16), Wells (5). 3B: Jones (1). HR: Acuña (12), off Headrick; Lombard (2), off Mederos; Rice (32), off Young. RBIs: Yastrzemski (33), Jarvis (11), Acuña (28), Smith (44), Jones 2 (15), Lombard (2), Rice (75). SB: Jones (4), Wells (2), Caballero (28). Runners left in scoring position: Atlanta 2 (Yastrzemski, Olson); New York 4 (Ramos 2, Caballero 2). RISP: Atlanta 4 for 9; New York 1 for 8. GDP: Ramos, Rice. DP: Atlanta 2 (Albies, Jarvis, Olson; Jarvis, Albies, Olson).
Atlanta IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA
Sale, L, 12-7 6.0 5 3 3 2 8 103 2.20
Mederos 1.0 1 1 1 1 2 30 3.63
Young 1.0 2 1 1 1 3 28 3.65
Yankees IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA
Cole, W, 6-5 7.0 6 2 2 0 9 82 3.35
Headrick, H, 17-0.2 2 1 1 0 0 19 15.52
Blackburn, H, 5-0.1 0 0 0 0 0 9 2.01
Bednar, S, 26-28 1.0 1 1 1 1 1 25 2.61
T: 2:49. A: 45,222 (47,309).

Nationals 8, Reds 2

Cincinnati	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
De La Cruz ss	4	0	0	0	0	1	.274
Stewart 1b	4	1	1	0	0	0	.255
Myers cf	4	0	1	0	0	0	.263
Suárez dh	3	1	1	2	1	0	.204
Bleday lf	4	0	0	0	0	1	.225
McLain 2b	2	0	0	0	2	1	.193
Trevino c	4	0	0	0	0	2	.242
Marte rf	3	0	1	0	0	0	.200
I.Johnson 3b	1	0	0	0	0	0	.083
Hayes 3b	2	0	0	0	0	1	.141
Rodríguez ph-rf	1	0	1	0	0	0	.200
Totals	32	2	5	2	3	6	

Washington	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Abrams ss	5	1	2	1	0	2	.288
Ortiz 1b	4	0	1	2	0	0	.211
Crews rf	4	1	1	0	0	1	.218
Lile lf	4	1	1	1	0	1	.244
Ruiz c	4	1	1	0	0	0	.270
Vivas 3b	2	1	0	0	2	1	.233
Núñez 2b	2	0	0	0	2	1	.229
Tena dh	2	1	1	0	0	1	.240
Chaparro ph-dh	2	2	2	3	0	0	.229
Young cf	3	0	1	1	0	0	.244
Totals	32	8	10	8	4	7	

Cincinnati	000	002	000	—	2	5	0
Washington	002	004	02x	—	8	10	0

LOB: Cincinnati 6, Washington 5. 2B: Abrams (23), Crews (10), Ruiz (21), Chaparro (7). HR: Suárez (16), off Kravick. RBIs: Suárez 2 (43), Ortiz 2 (3), Lile (60), Chaparro 3 (26), Young (40), Abrams (89). SB: Vivas (1). Runners left in scoring position: Cincinnati 3 (Suárez, De La Cruz, Hayes); Washington 0. RISP: Cincinnati 0 for 3; Washington 6 for 7.
Cincinnati IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA
Burns, L, 13-2 5.1 6 5 5 3 6 96 2.61
Moll 0.2 2 1 1 0 0 0 12 4.27
Marinaccio 2.0 2 2 2 1 1 1 38 5.13
Washington IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA
Alvarez 5.1 3 1 1 1 2 7 3.76
Kravick, BS, 0-1 0.2 1 1 1 0 0 9 8.64
Cruz 1.0 1 0 0 1 1 1 12 2.35
Beeter, W, 5-3 1.0 0 0 0 1 1 17 3.75
Cosgrove 1.0 0 0 0 0 2 13 2.70
T: 2:35. A: 32,602 (41,376).

Pirates 9, Mets 0

Mets	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Ewing lf	3	0	0	0	1	0	.266
Lindor ss	2	0	1	0	0	0	.234
Arias ss	2	0	0	0	0	1	.240
Bichette 3b	2	0	0	0	0	1	.255
Pache rf	2	0	0	0	0	1	.000
Young 1b	3	0	0	0	0	1	.249
Robert cf	3	0	1	0	0	1	.206
Baty rf-3b	3	0	0	0	0	2	.218
Semien 2b	3	0	0	0	0	1	.213
Polanco dh	3	0	0	0	0	1	.136
Alvarez c	3	0	1	0	0	0	.252
Totals	29	0	3	0	1	9	

Pittsburgh	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Mangum cf	5	2	3	1	0	1	.300
Triolo 3b	0	0	0	0	0	0	.245
Lowe 2b	4	2	1	1	1	3	.254
Garcia cf	0	0	0	0	0	0	.174
Reynolds dh	3	2	1	0	2	1	.268
Horwitz 1b	2	1	0	0	0	2	.269
Gonzales 3b-2b	5	0	1	3	0	1	.309
Simon rf	5	1	2	2	0	0	.286
Valdez lf	2	0	1	0	3	1	.248
Gonzalez ss	5	0	1	0	0	0	.236
Davis c	4	1	2	0	1	1	.176
Totals	35	9	12	8	9	8	

Mets	000	000	000	—	0	3	1
Pittsburgh	301	400	10x	—	9	12	0

E: Arias (4). LOB: New York 3, Pittsburgh 12. 2B: Mangum 2 (14), Simon (1), Gonzales (20). HR: Lowe (25), off Torrens. RBIs: Gonzales 3 (53), Simon 2 (2), Gonzalez (26), Mangum (26), Lowe (74). SB: Simon (1), Mangum (2). CS: Robert (3), Gonzalez (1). Runners left in scoring position: New York 0; Pittsburgh 6 (Gonzalez, Horwitz, Mangum, Davis 2, Gonzales). RISP: New York 0 for 0; Pittsburgh 4 for 15. Runners moved up: Gonzales. GDP: Gonzalez. DP: New York 1 (Semien, Arias, Young).

Mets	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Stock, L, 0-2	3.0	9	8	8	5	4	8010.12	
Curry	3.0	1	0	0	4	4	55 2.81	
Torrens	2.0	2	1	1	0	0	15 4.50	
Pittsburgh	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Chandler, W, 5-8	6.0	3	0	0	1	5	85 4.26	
Bachar	2.0	0	0	0	0	4	33 3.73	
Yates	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	13 3.56	
T: 2:28. A: 30,121 (38,753).								

Royals 6, Cubs 3

Chicago	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Crow-Armstrong dh	3	0	0	0	2	2	.287
Suzuki rf	4	0	0	0	0	1	.269
Busch 1b	4	0	1	0	0	0	.244
Bregman 3b	4	1	0	0	0	1	.246
Happ lf	4	1	2	1	0	1	.212
Hoerner 2b	4	1	1	0	1	1	.257
Kelly c	3	0	1	2	0	2	.265
Conforto ph	1	0	1	0	0	0	.231
Swanson ss	4	0	0	0	0	0	.213
Taylor cf	2	0	1	0	1	1	.242
Ramirez ph	1	0	0	0	0	1	.297
Totals	34	3	7	3	3	10	

Kansas City	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Jensen c	3	1	0	0	0	1	.227
Witt ss	3	1	1	0	1	0	.286
Caglianone 1b	4	2	4	4	0	0	.264
Collins lf	4	0	1	0	0	0	.239
Massey 2b	4	1	1	0	0	0	.259
Rave rf	3	1	1	0	1	0	.262
Loftin 3b	2	0	1	0	1	0	.247
Rojas dh	4	0	1	2	0	1	.235
Isbel cf	4	0	0	0	0	0	.236
Totals	31	6	10	6	4	1	

Padres 3, Astros 2

Houston	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Peña ss	4	0	0	0	0	2	.302
Alvarez dh	4	0	0	0	0	2	.325
Paredes 3b	4	0	1	0	0	1	.253
Altuve 2b	4	0	1	0	0	1	.245
Walker 1b	2	1	1	0	1	0	.242
Varsho cf	4	0	0	0	0	1	.236
Smith rf	3	0	0	0	1	3	.220
Trammell lf	2	1	1	1	0	0	.236
Diaz ph-c	1	0	1	1	1	0	.259
Vázquez c	2	0	0	0	0	0	.216
Meyers ph-lf	1	0	0	0	0	1	.213
Wade ph	1	0	0	0	0	0	.225

Totals	32	2	5	2	3	11	
San Diego	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Tatis rf	3	1	1	0	1	0	.281
Cronenworth 2b	4	0	1	0	0	1	.220
Machado 3b	4	0	1	0	0	1	.212
France 1b	2	0	0	0	2	0	.287
Merrill cf	4	1	1	2	0	1	.242
Campusano c	4	0	0	0	0	0	.296
Sheets dh	3	1	1	0	0	0	.212
Bogaerts ss	3	0	0	0	0	1	.223
Rengifo lf	2	0	0	0	1	0	.235
Bowen lf	0	0	0	0	0	0	.151

Totals	29	3	5	2	4	5	
Houston	010 000 001	—	2	5	1		
San Diego	101 100 00x	—	3	5	1		

E: Peña (6), Cronenworth (5). **LOB:** Houston 7, San Diego 6. **2B:** Paredes (20). **HR:** Trammell (7), off M.King; Merrill (17), off Trammell. **RBIs:** Trammell (20), Diaz (28), Merrill (2). **SB:** Cronenworth (7), Merrill (23). **CS:** Tatis (12). **Runners left in scoring position:** Houston 3 (Meyers 2, Walker); San Diego 3 (Campusano 2, Cronenworth). **RISP:** Houston 2 for 6; San Diego 0 for 6. **DP:** San Diego 1 (Bogaerts, France).

Houston	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Lambert, L, 8-6	5.0	5	3	2	3	3	97	3.09
De Los Santos	2.0	0	0	0	0	2	25	4.07
B.King	1.0	0	0	0	1	0	8	3.54

San Diego	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
M.King, W, 7-8	6.0	3	1	1	1	6	93	3.37
Estrada, H, 10 0.2	1	0	0	1	2	20	3.55	
Morejon, H, 18 1.1	0	0	0	1	2	23	2.89	
Miller, S, 29-30	1.0	1	1	1	0	1	22	0.91

T: 2:38. **A:** 41,937 (40,222).

Tigers 8, Giants 0

Detroit	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
McGonigle 3b	6	1	1	1	0	0	.287
Torres 2b	4	1	0	0	1	0	.261
Outman rf	0	0	0	0	0	0	.173
Dingler c	4	1	1	1	1	0	.275
Greene lf	4	1	1	0	1	3	.275
Malgeri pr-lf	0	1	0	0	0	0	.286
Keith dh	0	0	0	0	3	0	.272
Valencia ph-dh	2	1	1	2	0	0	.395
Torkelson 1b	3	0	1	1	2	0	.224
Clark cf	5	1	2	2	0	1	.333
Báez ss	5	0	2	1	0	1	.281
H.Lee pr-2b	0	0	0	0	0	0	.263
McKinsty rf-2b-ss	4	1	1	0	1	0	.221

Totals	37	8	10	8	9	5	
San Francisco	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Eldridge dh	4	0	0	0	0	1	.248
J.Lee rf	3	0	0	0	0	0	.301
Furman 2b	1	0	0	0	0	0	.000
Adames ss	3	0	1	0	0	1	.222
Kennedy 1b	0	0	0	0	0	0	.043
Devers 1b	3	0	0	0	0	2	.247
McCray rf	0	0	0	0	0	0	.100
Basabe 2b-ss	3	0	0	0	0	0	.296
Gilbert cf	3	0	0	0	0	0	.235
Leonard lf	3	0	1	0	0	1	.250
Cavanaugh c	0	0	0	0	1	0	.250
Susac ph-c	2	0	0	0	0	1	.246
Koss 3b	3	0	0	0	0	1	.148

Totals	28	0	2	0	1	7	
Detroit	000 001 601	—	8	10	0		
San Francisco	000 000 000	—	0	2	0		

LOB: Detroit 11, San Francisco 2. **2B:** McKinsty (13), Dingler (23), Valencia (4). **3B:** Clark (1). **RBIs:** Torkelson (59), McGonigle (45), Dingler (80), Valencia (2). **SB:** Clark (2), Báez (14). **Runners left in scoring position:** Detroit 6 (Báez 2, McGonigle 2, McKinsty 2); San Francisco 0. **RISP:** Detroit 7 for 16; San Francisco 0 for 0.

Detroit	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Jobe, W, 1-0	5.0	1	0	0	1	4	71	0.00
Holton, H, 10	2.0	0	0	0	0	2	26	2.83
Madden	2.0	1	0	0	0	1	27	2.25

San Francisco	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Roupp, L, 7-11	5.1	2	1	1	5	3	85	4.22
Winn	0.2	0	0	0	1	2	14	2.92
Harris	0.1	3	3	3	0	0	148	0.00
Sanmartin	0.2	4	3	3	0	0	181	1.81
Seymour	2.0	1	1	1	3	0	46	9.00

T: 2:41. **A:** 35,506 (41,915).

Blue Jays 7, Phillies 5, 11 inn.

Toronto	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Lukes rf	6	1	3	2	0	0	.268
Bateman cf	6	1	0	0	0	2	.125
Guerrero 1b	4	2	2	2	1	0	.262
J.Sánchez dh	3	0	1	0	0	1	.272
Kirk ph	0	0	0	0	0	0	.250
Springer pr-dh	0	1	0	0	0	0	.254
Schneider ph-dh	0	0	0	0	1	0	.144
Clement 2b	5	0	2	0	0	2	.285
Giménez ss	4	0	2	3	0	1	.239
Valenzuela c	4	1	0	0	1	3	.230
Smith 3b	1	0	0	0	1	1	.218
Okamoto ph-3b	3	0	0	0	0	1	.225
Straw lf	4	1	0	0	1	2	.218

Totals	40	7	10	7	6	13	
Philadelphia	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Schwarber 1b	3	0	1	0	1	1	.244
Bohm 1b	1	0	0	0	0	0	.224
Turner ss	5	2	2	1	0	0	.251
Harper dh	5	1	1	1	0	0	.257
Arraez 2b	4	1	2	1	0	0	.324
Stott 3b	4	1	2	0	1	0	.261
Marsh lf	4	0	0	1	1	0	.275
Crawford cf	4	0	1	1	1	0	.265
De La Cruz rf	5	0	0	0	0	2	.346
Stubbs c	4	0	0	0	0	2	.132
Sosa ph	1	0	0	0	0	0	.210

Totals	40	5	9	5	3	7	
Toronto	101 000 020	12	—	7	10	0	
Philadelphia	000 004 000	10	—	5	9	0	

LOB: Toronto 9, Philadelphia 9. **2B:** Giménez (18), Stott (25). **3B:** Crawford (4). **HR:** Guerrero (7), off Nola; Lukes (6), off Shugart; Turner (17), off Scherzer; Harper (25), off Scherzer. **RBIs:** Guerrero 2 (46), Giménez 3 (45), Lukes 2 (21), Turner (47), Harper (71), Marsh (52), Crawford (30), Arraez (48). **SB:** Stott (21). **CS:** Giménez (3), J.Sánchez (2). **SF:** Giménez, Marsh, Arraez. **RISP:** Toronto 4 for 14; Philadelphia 1 for 9.

Toronto	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Scherzer	5.1	5	2	2	0	4	84	7.25
Miles	0.2	3	2	2	0	0	14	3.25
Waldron	1.0	0	0	0	1	0	21	6.75
Fisher	1.0	1	0	0	1	1	19	3.79
Varland, W, 5-4	2.0	0	1	0	1	1	32	1.34
Estrada, S, 1-1	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	1	9.36

Philadelphia	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Nola	5.0	6	2	2	2	8	97	5.47
Raley	1.0	0	0	0	1	1	17	2.28
Bowlin, H, 8	1.0	0	0	0	0	1	8	2.81
Alvarado, BS, 1-3	0.2	1	2	2	1	2	27	5.77
Kerkering	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	3	3.38
Duran	1.0	1	0	0	0	1	16	1.79
Shugart, L, 2-1	2.0	2	3	1	1	1	39	4.93

T: 3:53. **A:** 40,010 (42,901).

White Sox 6, Guardians 3

Cleveland	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Kwan cf	5	0	1	0	0	2	.263
Adell rf	5	0	1	0	0	1	.235
DeLaeter dh	5	0	1	0	0	1	.279
Martínez lf	4	1	2	0	0	1	.235
Hoskins 1b	3	1	2	2	1	0	.183
Rocchio ss	4	0	1	0	0	0	.254
Bazzana 2b	3	0	1	0	0	0	.244
Ramírez ph-3b	1	0	0	0	0	0	.233
Hedges c	2	0	0	0	0	0	.269
Bailey ph-c	2	0	0	0	0	1	.193
Genao 3b-2b	3	1	2	1	0	0	.438

Totals	37	3	11	3	1	6	
Chicago	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Antonacchi lf	4	0	0	0	0	0	.274
Doyle cf	0	0	0	0	0	0	.214
Murakami 1b	3	1	1	1	1	1	.237
Vargas 3b	4	1	1	0	0	1	.234
C.Montgomery ss	4	0	1	0	0	3	.214
Acuña pr-ss	0	1	0	0	0	0	.249
Benintendi dh	2	1	1	0	0	1	.248
Grichuk ph-dh	1	0	0	0	0	0	.260
B.Montgomery rf	2	1	1	1	0	0	.239
Peters cf-lf	2	1	1	2	0	0	.265
Meidroth 2b	4	0	1	2	0	0	.274
Romo c	4	0	0	0	0	1	.126

Totals	30	6	7	6	3	7	
Cleveland	000 002 100	—	3	11	1		
Chicago	000 005 01x	—	6	7	0		

E: Bailey (6). **LOB:** Cleveland 9, Chicago 6. **2B:** Martínez (14), Adell (18), Peters (22). **HR:** Hoskins (13), off Kay; Genao (1), off Hicks; Murakami (26), off Williams. **RBIs:** Hoskins 2 (38), Genao (2), Murakami (53), Peters 2 (40), Meidroth 2 (46), B.Montgomery (24). **CS:** Martínez (3). **S:** Hedges. **RISP:** Cleveland 1 for 8; Chicago 3 for 9. **DP:** Cleveland 1 (Genao, Bazzana, Hoskins).

Cleveland	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Williams	5.2	3	2	2	2	7	102	3.55
Holderman, L, 6-3, BS, 1-2	0.0	2	3	3	0	0	16	2.22
Sabrowski	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	2	3.69
Herrin	1.0	1	1	1	1	0	16	3.82
Festa	1.0	1	0	0	0	0	12	4.28

Chicago	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Kay, W, 9-5	6.0	6	2	2	1	4	83	3.86
Hicks, H, 7	0.1	3	1	1	0	1	13	3.55
Newcomb, H, 9	0.2	0	0	0	0	1	8	2.76
Hudson, H, 7	1.0	1	0	0	0	0	13	2.77
Taylor, S, 6-9	1.0	1	0	0	0	1	17	2.28

T: 2:51. **A:** 38,227 (40,241).

Rockies

The POST Line

MLB Sunday		
Favorite	Money Line	Underdog
YANKEES	\$129-154	Braves
PIRATES	\$118-140	Mets
RED SOX	OFF	Athletics
Guardians	-105-112	WHITE SOX
Orioles	\$112-132	RANGERS
MARINERS	\$103-117	Rays
NATIONALS	OFF	Reds
CARDINALS	\$138-165	Rockies
Dodgers	\$121-143	D'BACKS
PHILLIES	OFF	Blue Jays
MARLINS	\$130-155	Angels
Cubs	\$137-164	ROYALS
BREWERS	\$197-241	Twins
Tigers	-101-118	GIANTS
PADRES	OFF	Astros

WNBA Sunday		
Favorite	PTS (O/U)	Underdog
LIBERTY	1.5 (184.5)	Aces
MYSTICS	1.5 (168.5)	Mercury
LYNX	8.5 (180.5)	Wings
Valkyries	5.5 (169.5)	SPARKS

NFL Exhibition Thursday- Week 1		
Favorite	PTS (O/U)	Underdog
BENGALS	3.5 (37.5)	Lions
STEELERS	1.5 (37.5)	Packers
PATRIOTS	1.5 (38.5)	Colts
TEXANS	1.5 (38.5)	Chargers
RAIDERS	1.5 (39.5)	Cardinals
49ERS	1.5 (38.5)	Titans
Friday		
Buccaneers	1.5 (36.5)	JETS
COMMANDERS	1.5 (36.5)	Dolphins
Broncos	3.5 (36.5)	FALCONS
Saturday,		
Vikings	1.5 (38.5)	GIANTS
BILLS	2.5 (37.5)	Panthers
BEARS	1.5 (38.5)	Browns
Jaguars	1.5 (38.5)	SAINTS
CHIEFS	1.5 (36.5)	Rams
Eagles	2.5 (36.5)	RAVENS
SEAHAWKS	2.5 (37.5)	Cowboys
Home team in CAPS		

SPORTS SHORTS

MLB: A's end Red Sox win streak

The Red Sox failed in their bid for a second winning streak of 10 or more games in the same season, losing to the Athletics 7-3 in Boston. The Red Sox recorded a franchise record-tying 15-game winning stretch, matching a mark from 1946, before it was stopped July 22.

● In Kansas City, Mo., the Royals made former Met **Clay Holmes** debut with the Cubs a forgettable affair, hammering him for four runs in his return from the injured list in Kansas City's 6-3 victory.

● In Philadelphia, **Nathan Lukes** hit a two-run home run in the 11th inning and the Blue Jays defeated the Phillies 7-5.

● In Arlington, Texas, **Jacob deGrom** struck out nine over five innings for his first victory in more than a month and the Rangers beat the Orioles 5-1.

● In Phoenix, **Shohei Ohtani** hit an RBI infield single in the top of the tenth inning to help the Dodgers earn a 2-1 victory over the Diamondbacks.

NFL: Shanahan plans to coach

49ers coach **Kyle Shanahan** said he is nearly fully recovered from the July 14 car crash that has limited him this summer and is ready to coach the team's first exhibition game Thursday night against Tennessee.

In his first news conference of training camp, he said he has just a few remaining symptoms from the concussion.

● Ravens Pro Bowl wide receiver **Zay Flowers** collided with safety **Jaylinn Hawkins** during practice and will be day to day after suffering a quad contusion, according to head coach **Jesse Minter**.

● Eagles All-Pro offensive lineman **Lane Johnson** said that his 14th season would "probably" be his last. Johnson, 36, missed four days of training camp this week for personal reasons before he returned Friday.

SOCCER: Messi's father dies at 68

Jorge Messi, the father of soccer star and Argentina captain **Lionel Messi**, died at a hospital in the central Argentine city of Rosario. He was 68. Jorge served as his son's agent and managed his business affairs.

The Rosario-based Club Atlético Newell's Old Boys announced his death in a social media post that said he had undergone treatment in recent months for an unspecified illness. Argentine newspaper La Nación reported that the viewing will be held at a private cemetery and will only be open to family and close friends.

WNBA: Lynx punch playoff ticket

Olivia Miles scored 26 points and the Lynx beat the Aces 98-87 in Minneapolis to clinch a playoff berth. Minnesota improved their record to a league-best 26-7.

ETC.: Hossler, Brennan tied for lead

Beau Hossler handled a half-dozen tough par putts and two rain delays for a 4-under 66 that gave him a share of the lead with **Michael Brennan** going into the final round of the Wyndham Championship in Greensboro, N.C. with postseason berths at stake.

● Apex won the \$1 million Hambletonian Stakes for 3-year-old trotters at the Meadowlands, holding off favorite Big Ranger by a nose in a stakes-record 1:49.2. Minoan was third, 4 1/4 lengths behind the top two finishers.

TOP PLAY

Libs will 'Aces' this test

By MIKE TURAY

The Liberty aim to extend their winning streak at home as the reigning WNBA champions, the Las Vegas Aces, visit for a high-stakes Sunday afternoon game.

This marks the fourth and final meeting of the regular season between these teams, with the Liberty winning two of the first three matchups, including the Commissioner's Cup final in late June.

Breanna Stewart and the Liberty are rolling, winners of three consecutive games, while A'Ja Wilson and the Aces are fresh off a loss in Minnesota on Saturday and are entering a grueling stretch of their schedule — with this being Las Vegas' third game in four days.

Odds makers have tabbed the Liberty as slim 1.5-point favorites on the spread.

This head-to-head matchup always provides

fireworks, featuring high-end talent and experienced competitors on both sides of the ball.

Las Vegas and New York boast two of the league's most explosive offensive units, ranking third and fourth in scoring with 91.8 and 90.1 points per game, respectively.

Wilson's 26.6 points per outing is the best in the WNBA, and she can be a nightmare to guard defensively. She recorded 33 points and 10 rebounds in the Aces' 104-99 win over the Liberty on July 30.

The Liberty counter with Stewart, the WNBA's third-leading scorer at 21.6 points per contest, alongside the elite shot-making and facilitation of Sabrina Ionescu.

The Liberty will likely lean on Jonquel Jones to shadow Wilson, hoping her physical presence can knock the perennial MVP out of rhythm.

THE PLAY: Liberty moneyline (-110, DraftKings)

Pitching Form

		(Game time)	2026			'26 vs OPP			CAREER			LAST 3 STARTS		
			W-L	ERA	*REC	W-L	ERA	VS OPP	W-L	ERA	VS OPP	W-L	IP	ERA
Mets	Manaea (L)		3-5	4.33	4-6	—	—	0-1	1-0	18.0	2.50	1-0	18.0	2.50
Pirates	Jones (R)	(1:35pm)	2-3	4.02	6-6	—	—	0-0	0-2	16.0	3.94	0-2	16.0	3.94
Braves	Holmes (R)		7-4	3.67	15-6	—	—	0-1	1-0	15.2	3.45	1-0	15.2	3.45
Yankees	Schlitter (R)	(1:35pm)	10-6	2.26	15-9	—	—	0-0	1-0	16.2	2.70	1-0	16.2	2.70
Blue Jays	Bieber (R)		3-2	5.11	4-4	0-0	0.00	1-0	2-1	13.1	4.05	1-1	13.1	4.05
Phillies	Luzardo (L)	(1:35pm)	10-5	3.36	15-8	1-0	1.59	1-1	1-1	21.1	2.95	1-1	21.1	2.95
Angels	Rodriguez (R)		3-4	7.24	3-8	—	—	0-0	0-1	16.0	5.06	0-1	16.0	5.06
Marlins	Gusto (R)	(1:40pm)	0-3	4.80	4-5	—	—	1-1	0-1	14.1	5.02	0-1	14.1	5.02
Cubs	Boyd (L)		7-1	3.59	10-3	—	—	9-11	1-0	20.2	2.18	1-0	20.2	2.18
Royals	Dobnak (R)	(2:10pm)	2-0	1.16	3-1	0-0	0.00	0-0	2-0	17.0	0.53	2-0	17.0	0.53
Twins	Prielipp (L)		3-5	4.75	6-9	0-1	1.50	0-1	1-0	16.0	3.94	1-0	16.0	3.94
Brewers	Misiorowski (R)	(2:10pm)	11-5	1.63	13-8	0-0	0.00	1-0	1-1	16.0	1.69	1-1	16.0	1.69
Tigers	Melton (R)		7-1	1.58	10-2	0-0	0.00	0-0	2-0	19.0	0.95	2-0	19.0	0.95
Giants	Webb (R)	(4:05pm)	7-7	3.74	8-12	0-1	4.50	1-2	2-0	18.0	3.00	2-0	18.0	3.00
Astros	Javier (R)		1-2	6.58	1-4	0-0	0.00	0-0	0-1	10.0	6.30	0-1	10.0	6.30
Padres	TBD	(8:20pm)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Athletics	Ginn (R)		—	—	—	—	—	1-0	1-1	16.2	5.94	1-1	16.2	5.94
Red Sox	Sandoval (L)	(1:35pm)	1-0	3.38	5-0	0-0	3.60	4-4	1-0	14.2	2.45	1-0	14.2	2.45
Guardians	Cantillo (L)		8-7	3.87	15-9	0-0	0.00	2-0	0-2	12.2	4.97	0-2	12.2	4.97
White Sox	Martin (R)	(2:10pm)	9-6	4.13	13-9	0-0	5.40	1-3	0-1	16.0	9.56	0-1	16.0	9.56
Orioles	Povich (L)		2-1	3.91	2-2	0-0	0.00	1-0	1-1	13.0	5.54	1-1	13.0	5.54
Rangers	Rocker (R)	(2:35pm)	4-8	4.08	8-11	0-0	0.00	0-0	2-0	18.0	2.50	2-0	18.0	2.50
Rays	Seymour (L)		8-3	4.27	5-3	0-1	13.50	0-1	1-1	12.1	7.30	1-1	12.1	7.30
Mariners	Hancock (R)	(4:10pm)	6-6	3.33	10-11	0-0	0.00	0-0	0-2	17.0	4.24	0-2	17.0	4.24
Reds	Singer (R)		5-10	4.67	9-13	0-1	7.36	0-2	1-1	17.0	5.29	1-1	17.0	5.29
Nationals	TBD	(12:15pm)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rockies	Lorenzen (R)		3-10	6.94	9-14	0-0	23.62	4-3	0-1	10.2	13.50	0-1	10.2	13.50
Cardinals	McGreevy (R)	(2:15pm)	4-9	3.59	10-12	1-0	2.77	1-0	0-2	12.1	9.49	0-2	12.1	9.49
Dodgers	Wrobleksi (L)		11-3	3.31	12-6	0-0	0.00	0-1	1-1	16.2	7.02	1-1	16.2	7.02
D'backs	Rodriguez (L)	(4:10pm)	10-4	2.71	17-6	1-0	1.59	3-4	2-1	19.2	3.20	2-1	19.2	3.20

* REC: Won-lost record of pitcher's team in games he has started.

STITCHES

Let's go Mets, Manaea

They're on their way home. Geno Smith is back with the Jets. Odell Beckham Jr. is back with the Giants. And my good friend Larry Young will be back home soon after a short stay in rehab.

Hurry home, Larry!

Speaking of comebacks: The Mets are thinking wild card after winning four in a row. No, they are not gonna make it, but they can win again Sunday. Sean Manaea won for us at Cleveland last week, allowing two runs over six innings. Manaea has given up five runs over his past 18 innings.

The Amazin's are at Pittsburgh. The Pirates are heading in the wrong direction, and Jared Jones has two in a row, giving up six runs on 12 hits in his past 10 innings. Jones has not won a game at home this season after six starts. Play \$50 on the Mets.

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It's been a long time since we won a laugh. Sandy Alcantara picked up his 13th win. Xavier Edwards knocked in 3 runs. Marlins 7, Angels 0. W has us at -615 leemazillis.

stitches@nypost.com

Home Team Lineups

HOME AWAY

	TODAY Aug. 9	MON Aug. 10	TUE Aug. 11	WED Aug. 12	THU Aug. 13
	Atlanta 1:35 YES 660 AM 101.9 FM	NO GAME	Seattle 7:05 YES 660 AM 101.9 FM	Seattle 7:05 ESPN 660 AM 101.9 FM	Seattle 1:35 YES 660 AM 101.9 FM
	Pittsburgh 1:35 SNY 880 AM	Atlanta 7:15 SNY 880 AM	Atlanta 7:15 SNY 880 AM	Atlanta 7:15 SNY 880 AM	NO GAME
	Las Vegas 12:30 ABC	NO GAME	Indiana 7:30 ESPN	NO GAME	Los Angeles 8:00 Prime Video

Saturday

Friday

	Preseason: Minnesota 1:00 WNBC 4 101.9 FM		Preseason: Tampa Bay 7:00 WCBS 2 104.3 FM
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Saturday

Today

Friday

	Atlanta United 7:30 Apple TV		Cruz Azul 7:30 Fox/Appie TV Univision		KC Current 8:00 Prime Video
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Today's Sports on the Air

MLB BASEBALL

Noon	Reds at Nationals	NBCSN, Peacock
1:35 p.m.	Braves at Yankees	YES, 660 AM, 101.9 FM
1:35 p.m.	Mets at Pirates	SNY, 880 AM
4 p.m.	Dodgers at Diamondbacks	MLBN
8 p.m.	Astros at Padres	NBC, Peacock

WNBA BASKETBALL

12:30 p.m.	Aces at Liberty	ABC
3:30 p.m.	Wings at Lynx	NBC, Peacock
7 p.m.	Valkyries at Sparks	ESPN

MEN'S SOCCER

9:30 a.m.	Club Friendly: AS Monaco vs. Liverpool	CBSSN
7 p.m.	CONCACAF U-20 Championship Final: Mexico vs. United States	FS2
7:30 p.m.	Leagues Cup: Cruz Azul at NYCFC	FS1, Apple TV, Univision
10:15 p.m.	Leagues Cup: Club America at Portland Timbers	FS1, Apple TV

NWSL WOMEN'S SOCCER

4 p.m.	Portland Thorns at Boston Legacy	CBSSN
9 p.m.	Angel City FC at Seattle Reign	ESPN

GOLF

9 a.m.	Ladies Euro Tour: PIF London Championship, Final Round	Golf
11 a.m.	LIV Golf League: Final Round	Fox
1 p.m.	PGA Tour: Wyndham Championship, Final Round	Golf
3 p.m.	PGA Tour: Wyndham Championship, Final Round	CBS
3 p.m.	2026 U.S. Women's Amateur: Championship Final Match	Golf

BIG3 BASKETBALL

1 p.m.	Week 8: Dallas Power vs. Chicago Triplets, Boston Ball Hogs vs. Detroit Amps	CBS
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TENNIS

12:30 p.m.	ATP/WTB Canada: Round of 16	Tennis
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AUTO RACING

7:30 a.m.	FIM MotoGP: Great Britain Grand Prix	FS1
1 p.m.	NTT IndyCar Series: OnlyBulls Grand Prix of Portland: Warmup	FS1
2 p.m.	Indy NXT Series: Grand Prix of Portland	FS1
3:30 p.m.	NASCAR Cup Series: Iowa Corn 350 Powered by Ethanol	USA
4 p.m.	NTT IndyCar Series: OnlyBulls Grand Prix of Portland	Fox

LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL WORLD SERIES

10 a.m.	3rd Place Game: Lake Mary, Fla. vs. Toms River, N.J.	ESPN
3 p.m.	Championship: Clayton, N.C. vs. Owensboro, Ky.	ABC

LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL WORLD SERIES

2 p.m.	Southeast Regional: Tallahassee, Fla. vs. Phenix City, Ala.	ESPN
4 p.m.	Southwest Regional: Tulsa, Okla. vs. Gonzales, La.	ESPN

SOFTBALL

8 p.m.	AUSL All-Star Cup: Team Ricketts vs. Team Garcia	MLBN
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HORSE RACING

1 p.m.	Saratoga Live	FS2
3 p.m.	Saratoga Live	FS1
7 p.m.	FanDuel Racing	MSGSN

GYMNASTICS

1:30 p.m.	USGA: 2026 Xfinity U.S. Gymnastics Championships	NBC
4 p.m.	USGA: 2026 Xfinity U.S. Gymnastics Championships	NBCSN
6 p.m.	USGA: 2026 Xfinity U.S. Gymnastics Championships	NBC

ODDS & ENDS

NHL

Favorites to win
2026-27 Stanley Cup

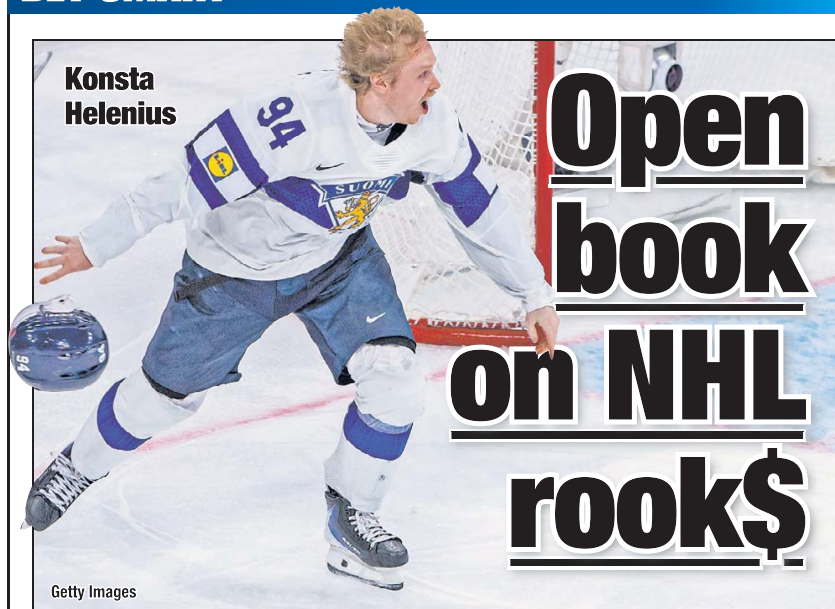
TEAM	ODDS
Panthers	+650
Avalanche	+750
Hurricanes	+800
Golden Knights	+850
Oilers	+900
Lightning	12/1
Wild	14/1
Stars	17/1
Capitals	17/1
Canadiens	20/1
Maple Leafs	30/1
Ducks	33/1
Mammoth	33/1
Sabres	35/1
Devils	35/1
Kings	40/1
Senators	40/1
Sharks	40/1
Flyers	55/1
Blue Jackets	66/1
Rangers	80/1
Penguins	80/1
Bruins	100/1
Islanders	125/1
Red Wings	150/1
Jets	150/1
Predators	175/1
Blackhawks	200/1
Blues	200/1
Kraken	400/1
Flames	500/1
Canucks	500/1

NASCAR

Favorites to win
Iowa Corn 350

DRIVER	ODDS
Denny Hamlin	+470
Ryan Blaney	+500
Christopher Bell	+550
Joey Logano	+850
Chase Briscoe	+900
Kyle Larson	+900
William Byron	+900
Ty Gibbs	10/1
Chase Elliott	18/1
Tyler Reddick	18/1
Brad Keselowski	22/1
Bubba Wallace	22/1
Carson Hocevar	25/1
Alex Bowman	50/1
Ryan Preece	60/1
Chris Buescher	60/1
Austin Cindric	75/1
Austin Dillon	80/1
Ross Chastain	100/1
Daniel Suárez	100/1
Shane van Gisbergen	100/1
Erik Jones	150/1
Michael McDowell	150/1
Josh Berry	175/1
John Hunter Nemechek	300/1
AJ Allmendinger	300/1

BET SMART

Konsta
HeleniusOpen
book
on NHL
rook\$

Getty Images

By MICHAEL LEBOFF

It's hard to believe now, but Matthew Schaefer wasn't the favorite to win the Calder Trophy when the season opened last year. Heck, Schaefer wasn't even the second choice.

Ivan Demidov, who finished a distant second to No. 48 in the voting, was the runaway chalk at +185 opening night. Behind him were Zeev Buium, Michael Misa and Jimmy Snuggerud, all of whom were between 8/1 and 12/1. Schaefer was 13/1. Seems crazy now, but it's a reminder of just how volatile this market is.

A similar situation played out in 2024-25, too. That season's rookie class was expected to be generational, with Matvei Michkov and Macklin Celebrini leading the way, but it was a different debutant, Lane Hutson, who took over the race and brought home the award.

This year's rookie class may not be considered as elite as the past two, but there are a couple of clear headliners: Gavin McKenna and Porter Martone.

McKenna, who was selected No. 1 overall by the Maple Leafs, is a shoo-in to make the team out of camp and play in a top six role. Martone is already a fan favorite in Philadelphia after he registered five points in 10 playoff games last spring.

The two are co-favorites to win the 2026-27 Calder Trophy at +300, just ahead of Sharks winger Ivar Stenberg (+600), 2025 No. 3 overall pick Anton Frondell (+900) and Cole Hutson (+900) of the Capitals.

All five figure to be handed big roles this season, which is a critical part of handicapping this market, but there are a lot of other players who tick that box, too. And their prices are a lot more appealing:

Konsta Helenius, Sabres
(18/1, bet365)

It flew under the radar because so much was going right for the Sabres last year, but Helenius was the goods in his

brief spin with the big club. He tallied four points in nine games during the regular season then added a pair of goals in four playoff contests. The former No. 14 overall pick passed the eye test, too, as he was a ball of energy in Buffalo's middle six.

Helenius was also a beast in the AHL, registering 63 points in 63 games, and was one of the best players for Finland at the World Championships, scoring the golden goal and notching six points.

Helenius is almost certain to get a prime role with the Sabres next season, and he's already proven he can compete at the varsity level.

Viggo Björck, Jets (40/1, bet365)

By all accounts, the Jets will give Björck every opportunity to break camp as their No. 2 center. Winnipeg needs a shot in the arm, and fair or not, Björck will be the one asked to provide it.

Björck, who was picked No. 8 overall at the 2026 draft, was tabbed as an NHL-ready prospect, and the Jets are in a position to let the Swede learn on the fly. He fills a need for them down the middle, and the franchise desperately wants to give its small-but-rabid fanbase a reason to be excited.

If the Jets do let Björck roll out of the gates, he'll be in a plum position to put up big numbers.

Alberts Smits, Rangers
(100/1, bet365)

Constantly highlighted as the most NHL-ready defenseman of the 2026 draft, Alberts Smits should be given a real chance to break camp with the Rangers in September.

The big Latvian has already played two stints in Finland's top league, as well as one in Germany's, so he's got plenty of experience playing against much older players. He was also a force to be reckoned with for Latvia at the 2026 Olympics, playing nearly 19 minutes a night against some outstanding competition.

mleboff@nypost.com

MADE IN THE KADE

M's prospect a great late-season stash

OVER the past week, four big-time prospects got the chance to live their dreams and play their first games in the majors.

Detroit's Max Clark went deep in his second game while George Lombard Jr. aided a Yankees win with his first career long ball in his first game. Angel Genao became the first Guardians player to log four hits in his debut and Quinn Matthews made his first start for St. Louis.

Now it's time to seek out the next batch of highly touted youngsters who have the potential to make a fantasy impact.

After the Mariners traded Luis Castillo to the White Sox at Monday's deadline, Seattle's top prospect Kade Anderson was named "the next starter up" by team president Jerry Dipoto.

When will the No. 3 pick of the 2025 draft be called up? That remains to be seen, but we do know Seattle has no intentions of using him in the bullpen. When he gets the call, he will start.

Is Anderson worth stashing despite not knowing when (or even if) he will join the Mariners? Is fire hot? Is ice cold?

As Dipoto told the Seattle Times, Anderson is "the best starting pitcher in the minor leagues" — and that's not just a team executive hyping up his star prospect. The 22-year-old has dominated in Double-A, and even

that feels like an understatement.

Not only did Anderson own a 40.5 percent strikeout rate over his first 16 starts, but he also had a .149 opponents' average, a 37 percent whiff rate and an 18.6 percent swinging-strike rate. The 6-foot-2 southpaw walked 12 batters over his first 82 1/3 innings (4.1 percent of the batters he faced). He completed half of his outings without issuing a walk.

As of Friday, Anderson led the minors (all levels) in ERA (1.20), WHIP (0.66), opponents' average, strand rate, strikeout rate and swinging-strike rate. He was tied with 10 others for the second most wins (nine) and had the fourth-best walk rate.

Anderson has not allowed more than two earned runs in any start, and May is the only month in which he allowed more than two earned runs (and he still went 3-0 with a 2.13 ERA with a 0.79 WHIP, 37-3 strikeout-walk rate and .191 opponents' average in five starts).

From May 22-June 19, Anderson pitched 27 2/3 consecutive scoreless innings, and he went 4-0 with a 0.79 ERA, 32 strikeouts and .145 opponents' average in four June starts. His only loss came in July, when he owned a 1.15 ERA, .094 opponents' average and 20 strikeouts (in 15 2/3 innings).

Anderson, who had Tommy John surgery during his junior year in high school in 2022, has

owned left-handed hitters (.184 with 33 strikeouts and a .498 OPS). As bad as lefties have been against him, right-handed hitters have looked downright lost, hitting .134 with 86 strikeouts and a .366 OPS.

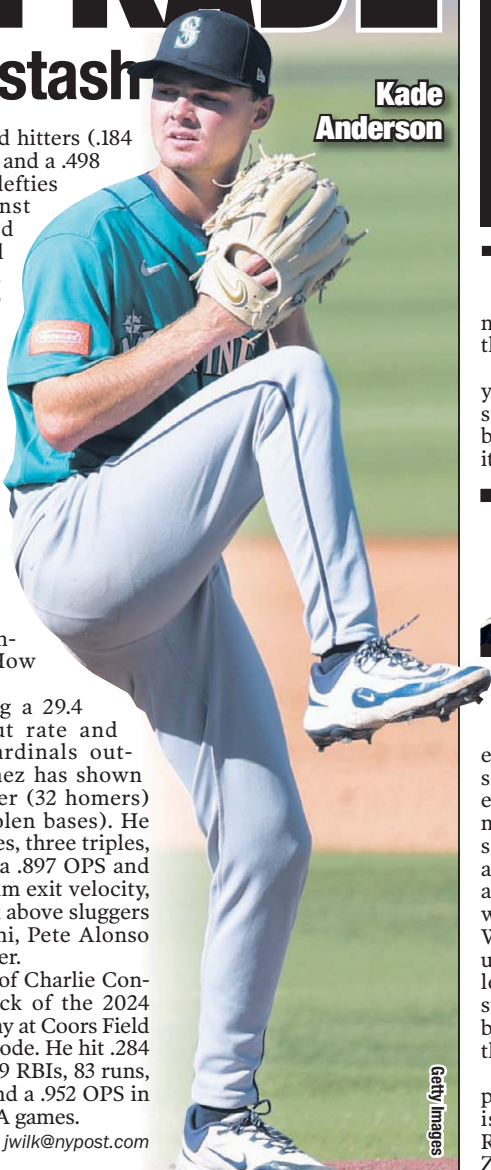
Anderson, rostered in less than 25 percent of ESPN and Yahoo leagues, is about as close to a sure thing prospect as you can get and is Roto Rages' favorite prospect to stash.

Looking for other candidates? How about some bats?

Despite owning a 29.4 percent strikeout rate and .252 average, Cardinals outfielder Joshua Baez has shown tremendous power (32 homers) and speed (18 stolen bases). He also had 22 doubles, three triples, 84 RBIs, 75 runs, a .897 OPS and 115.4 mph maximum exit velocity, which would rank above sluggers like Shohei Ohtani, Pete Alonso and Kyle Schwarber.

The possibility of Charlie Condon, the third pick of the 2024 draft, getting to play at Coors Field feels like a cheat code. He hit .284 with 22 homers, 69 RBIs, 83 runs, six stolen bases and a .952 OPS in his first 94 Triple-A games.

jwilk@nypost.com



Kade Anderson

Trade fallout can save season

THE MLB trade deadline is notoriously chaotic, but it presents one of the single best opportunities to reshape a fantasy roster on the waiver wire.

If you are looking to add saves to your fantasy pitching staff for the stretch run, tracking post-deadline bullpen upheavals isn't just helpful, it is essential.



FANTASY ALARM

Howard Bender

Take the Pirates' recent acquisition of Luke Weaver from the Mets. Weaver's change of scenery gives him an immediate, massive surge in fantasy value, as he is expected to serve as the Pirates' primary closer. He has been nothing short of dominant on the mound, allowing just one earned run over a 32-inning span stretching all the way back to April 30. In Pittsburgh, Weaver isn't just an option to pick up cheap saves, his elite, high-leverage efficiency means he can stabilize your WHIP and ERA while boosting your strikeout totals down the stretch.

Another bullpen arm suddenly positioned for high-leverage work is right-hander Ryan Zeferjahn. Recently acquired by the Cubs, Zeferjahn brings swing-and-miss stuff that immediately puts him in line to harvest ninth-inning opportunities. With Daniel Palencia still on the injured list, the Cubs lack a settled closer, paving the way for Zeferjahn to see a steady stream of ninth-inning chances. Pitchers who miss bats at a 33.3 percent clip rarely stay hidden on waiver wires for long, especially when high-leverage situations are up for grabs.

The end of the trade deadline marks a critical transition period in fantasy baseball. Adding saves late in the season doesn't always require a splashy trade of your own. Sometimes, it just takes spotting the right bullpen upheaval before the rest of your league catches on.

Howard Bender is the head of content at FantasyAlarm.com. Follow him on X @rotobuzzguy and catch him on the award-winning "Fantasy Alarm Radio Show" on the SiriusXM fantasy sports channel weekdays from 6-8 p.m. Go to FantasyAlarm.com for all your fantasy baseball news and advice.

BIG HITS

Sal Stewart 1B/3B, Reds

Hit .320 with five home runs, 16 RBIs, one stolen base and a 1.017 OPS in his past 14 games before Friday.

Sean Burke SP, White Sox

Had not allowed more than two runs in any of his past eight starts, going 4-2 with a 1.64 ERA, 11.6 strikeouts per nine, 1.8 walks per nine, a .202 opponents' average and 14.2 percent strikeout rate.

Ezequiel Duran INF, Rangers

Went 21-for-70 (.300) with three homers, 13 RBIs, 11 runs, two stolen bases and a .903 OPS in his first 19 second-half games.

David Peterson SP, Cubs

He is 3-1 with a 4.03 ERA in his first seven starts with the Cubs, but is 2-0 with a 1.57 ERA and .192 opponents' average in his past five outings.

BIG WHIFFS

Ben Rice 1B, Yankees

Hit .171 with 25 strikeouts and a .589 OPS in his first 19 second-half games, and also went 0-for-13 in his first five games this month.

Justin Wroblewski SP, Dodgers

Gave up eight home runs and 12 earned runs in his past two starts (10 1/3 innings), going 0-1 with a 10.45 ERA and .318 opponents' average.

Freddy Peralta SP, Rays

New home, same result: The former Met allowed seven runs over 3 2/3 innings in his Rays debut. He has allowed 41 earned runs, 10 homers and a .320 opponents' average in his past 10 starts.

Gage Jump SP, Athletics

Allowed 26 earned runs and seven homers while going 1-6 with a 7.47 ERA, 6.0 walks per nine and .331 opponents' average in his past seven starts.

CHECK SWINGS

● **Gavin Williams** struck out eight or more batters in 11 of his first 23 starts before pitching Saturday. The Guardians righty is 7-2 with a 1.60 ERA, 43.1 percent strikeout rate, 5 percent walk rate, .145 opponents' average and a 15.8 percent swinging-strike rate in those outings.

● **Boston's Cedanne Rafaela** had at least one hit in 26 of his past 30 games since July 1, hitting .305 with eight homers, 24 RBIs, 23 runs, six stolen bases, a .565 slugging percentage and .896 OPS.

● **Casey Mize** allowed eight earned runs and three walks over 3 1/3 innings in Padres debut Wednesday. He allowed more runs in that one outing than he did across his last five starts with the Tigers from June 29 through July 25 (2-1, 2.20 ERA).

TEAM NAME OF THE WEEK

Down on the Hoerner

Submit to jwilk@nypost.com

L.I. squad breezes in 1st LLWS regional

By ALEX MITCHELL

It was smooth sailing.

Port Washington looked like naturals in the team's first-ever Little League World Series regional game, as the New York State champs cruised to a 10-3 victory over Lincoln, R.I., at Leon J. Breen Field in Bristol, Conn., Saturday evening.

The Long Island boys' maiden voyage started hot at the top of the first inning as left fielder Carlo Cafferata doubled in a run and first baseman Max Dempsey brought home another on a bases-loaded fielder's choice.

Port loaded the bags again in the third against pitcher Tucker Choiniere. Lincoln left fielder Jackson Lockhart was called to the mound to get out of the situation, but a warning-track-length single from third baseman Jack Gomez scored a pair and pushed the lead to 4-0.

Center fielder Walter Cassens brought in another run by advancing on a bases-loaded error soon after, and catcher Michael Gabriel trotted to first on an RBI walk that stretched things to 6-0.

Port pitcher Drew Theoharis threw two shutout innings but gave up an RBI double in the bottom of the third to Choiniere, who scored on a fielder's choice that cut the lead to 6-2.

Theoharis ended his productive three-inning, one-batter day with three strikeouts and one hit before Cafferata took over on the rubber.

Second baseman Jackson Gorynski pushed the lead to 7-2 with an RBI double off Lincoln reliever Milo Sheridan in the fourth inning.

Cafferata's pitching was disrupted in the bottom of the fifth inning by a 75-minute lightning delay. He gave up a run on a wild pitch but kept control with a huge inning-ending strikeout of Lockhart with two runners on.

Port continued the hit parade into the final inning with shortstop Brandon Kien driving in two runs with a single. He advanced to second on the play after a throwing error.

Kien then scored from second on a wild pitch and errant throw to third to push the lead to 10-3.

Gorynski came on to close in the sixth and worked himself out of a bases-loaded, two-out jam by getting infielder Eli Lambert to pop out.

Port is now two wins away from Williamsport, Pa., and will play Monday in the winners bracket at 1 p.m. A victory will put them in the Metro Region finals.

A Monday loss isn't doomsday, as Port would then have a double-elimination game Wednesday night for a spot in the tristate championship.

amitchell@nypost.com

By CHRISTIAN ARNOLD

Hitting off the tee on the first hole at Trump National Bedminster, Bryson DeChambeau watched as his ball landed in the rough off to the right of the fairway. As he lined up his second shot on the hole, behind him a crowd swelled to get a glimpse of the LIV Golf star.

While the third day of LIV Golf New York saw an increased crowd make the trip to the New Jersey course, it was clear who the main attractions were on Saturday.

"I think you could see it in the crowds that are following him," Christian Pellegrino told The Post after DeChambeau had walked off the green on the fourth hole. "It's pretty incredible everywhere he goes there's a big crowd. ... I think he's a pretty big draw."

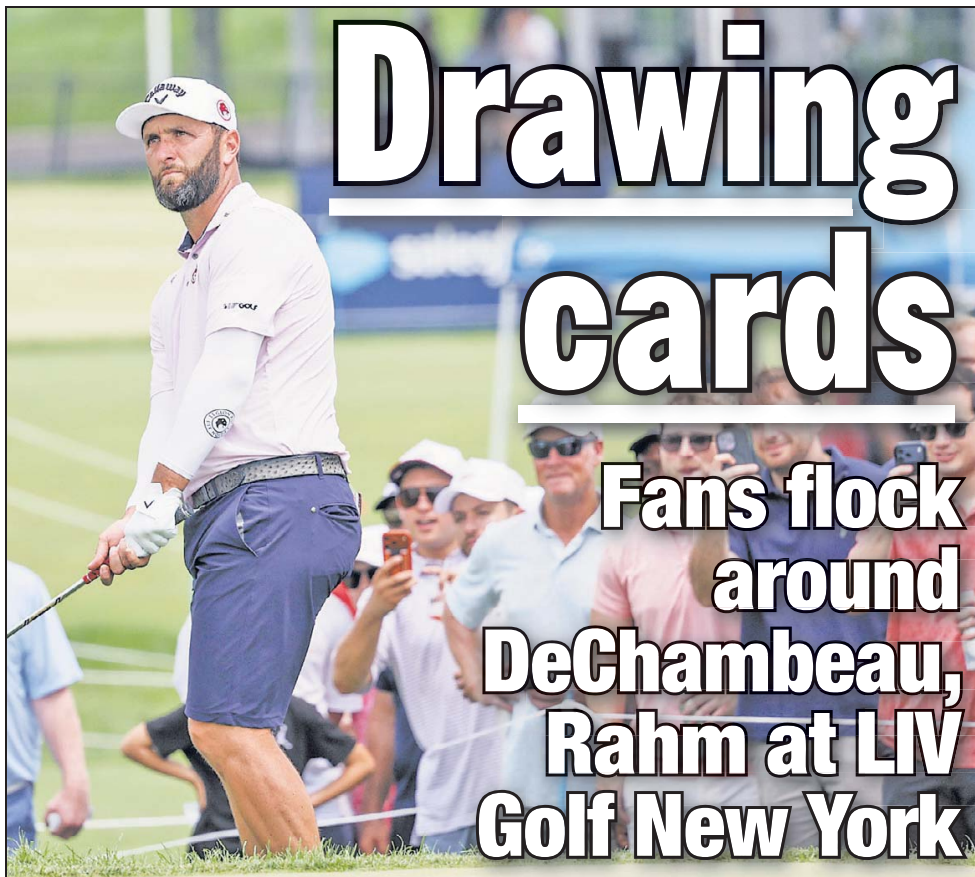
LIV Golf boasts several big names among its rosters, which include DeChambeau, Jon Rahm, Cam Smith and Dustin Johnson, but the crowds seem to flock to DeChambeau and Rahm. Golf fan Kristian Johnson told The Post the two were the "big names that I'd love to come out and see."

DeChambeau and Rahm both hold four major titles between them, which include Rahm's 2023 Masters victory and DeChambeau's pair of U.S. Open wins. DeChambeau has also built up a massive following on YouTube, which has drawn new and younger fans to the sport of golf.

Rahm and DeChambeau are also sitting first and second, respectively, on the LIV Golf player standings, which fan Tate Stevens chalked up to being part of the draw as well.

"Bryson has a big [presence] on YouTube right now, and I think a lot of his fans come here and watch him at LIV. I think Jon, he's a good guy, plays good and I think that's why they like him," Stevens added.

The two also play a major hand in the future of LIV Golf, which remains somewhat uncertain, despite this week's announcement that the tour CEO Scott O'Neil had secured investments to keep the rebel golf



LIV LONG AND PROSPER: Jon Rahm, on the green at No. 15 on Saturday, has drawn big galleries at this weekend's LIV Golf event at Trump National Bedminster in New Jersey. Crowds were larger for the third round, thanks largely to big names like Rahm and Bryson DeChambeau. Heather Khalifa

league going past 2026.

The Saudi Public Investment Fund's decision to pull its financial backing earlier this year threw the future of LIV into flux.

DeChambeau exclusively told The Post earlier this week that he was "100 percent" sure of LIV's future following the news of the investment, while also saying, "I'd love to be able to play events on the PGA Tour, too."

Rahm has a contract with LIV beyond this year, but he has remained tight-lipped about his commitment going forward.

While golf fans at LIV New York told The Post during this week's event that they weren't too worried about the off-the-course drama surrounding the

league's funding, the topic has been the talk of the golf world since April.

Following his round Saturday, Harold Varner III gave a staunch defense of LIV's impact on the golf space.

"I think it's one of the greatest things that's ever happened to me," Varner said. "I would hope everyone would take it as an opportunity and not worry about all the negative stuff. I think we're getting really good at worrying about what could go wrong or this or that and not appreciating the good stuff that we did have or what we do have right in front of us."

"At the end of the day, no one is going to die. It's golf. There's

people dealing with way more important things in life that I think are way more important. So with all that stuff you're talking about, I think it's important when you're writing, but it's not important to what I do every day and what I love to do, and that's go try to shoot as low as I can every day."

President Donald Trump made a brief appearance at Saturday's third round when he drove between the 16th tee box and 15th green in a golf cart as he was making his way back to the clubhouse.

Trump had flown into New Jersey on Friday night and arrived at Bedminster at 5:56 p.m. carnold1@nypost.com

Hard foul leads to wild scene at WNBA contest

By ANDREW BATTIFARANO

Things got tense on the court between the Fever and Sky on Saturday.

And one player was shown an early exit.

The Sky's Dijonai Carrington was assessed a flagrant 2 foul and ejected from the game during the first quarter after a hard foul against the Fever's Sophie Cunningham.

Cunningham attempted a layup with around two minutes left in the quarter, and as she went up, Carrington whacked her from behind up high and hit the Fever guard in the face.

Cunningham fell to the floor and then got up, and incensed by the foul, she started to shove Carrington before she was separated by her Fever teammates.

Referees reviewed the shooting foul and deter-

mined, after looking at a replay, that Carrington committed a flagrant 2, meaning they felt the foul was "unnecessary" and "excessive."

Carrington stood on the Chicago bench with her mouth open in what appeared to be disbelief.

Cunningham was shown on the broadcast clapping her hands as her opponent was removed from the ballgame.

Cunningham has generated plenty of headlines in recent weeks over her comments on transgender athletes in women's sports.

"I want to protect young girls in a locker room, or young girls in sport who shouldn't have to go against biological men," Cunningham told ESPN in a lengthy interview at the end of July.

In recent days, Cunningham told reporters she preferred if the media focused

more on the on-the-court issues than what she said off it.

"So, it is what it is. And like I said, we're in the middle of the season," she said this week. "I'm gonna keep at that. We talk about a bunch of distraction; our team is good, my teammates are good, our locker room is great. And so, now we're just here, about to prepare for Las Vegas. And that's where my mind is at."

PICK A PATH

Nets-Porter union could go a few different ways

By BRIAN LEWIS

Michael Porter Jr. is talking about retirement.

His agent and the Nets are talking about an extension, or at least will be.

And Brooklyn fans are wondering whether we'll all be talking about a Porter trade.

Again.

The idea of Nets GM Sean Marks letting his leading scorer hit unrestricted free agency a year from now seems inconceivable. But so does the notion of Porter getting the full four-year, \$234 million extension he's eligible for, be it from Brooklyn or anybody else.

Can they find a middle ground?

"I'm sure we'll have those discussions," Marks said last month. "We value him a lot. He had a terrific year last year, arguably his best year as a pro. I give him a lot of credit for that."

"I also give Jordi [Fernández] and the coaching staff a heck of a lot of credit for putting him in places where he can have that type of success. It's been great to see what Mike's done for us. So I look forward to having those discussions, and just seeing what Mike can do the rest of the summer and the rest of the season."

On a \$40.8M expiring contract, Porter still has the rest of this season to sign an extension or enter free agency. But he's the Nets' biggest asset, and Marks isn't in the business of letting assets walk out the door.

Though both Marks and Porter's agent Mark Bartelstein have declined questions from The Post about the progress of extension talks, Heavy.com reported that the forward wants a deal starting at roughly what he's making now. The Nets likely won't go that high.

One option is to use their \$4.9 million in salary-cap space to actually renegotiate his final season upward of \$45 million, then start his extension at a lower salary, less than \$35 million. That would give the Nets more flexibility, though the Heavy report suggests that could be a tough sell.

Can Brooklyn and Porter reach a middle ground? If not, it would reignite trade rumors, like the ones that hovered over Porter at last season's trade deadline.

The upcoming season's deadline is expected to be Feb. 11. Due to the quirks of the CBA, that makes Tuesday worth watching.

If Porter gets an extension — with a

raise of 5 percent or more than two additional seasons — then he can't be traded for six months. And if the Nets renegotiate his contract, he also can't be moved for six months.

That means if Marks plans to do either of those things with Porter, he'd have to do them by Tuesday, or the forward couldn't be traded until next summer.

It should be noted that even Porter on an expiring contract has value and would fetch a return. And the Nets could always extend Porter and either deal him a year or more down the line, or keep him as a long-term piece in their rebuild.

The latter prospect admittedly worries some Nets fans. Those fears get stoked when he comes out as he did this week speaking about retirement.

"When we start having kids, I don't want other people really raising my kids," Porter said on the "Girls, Disrupted" podcast. "But the thing is, I don't want to play basketball for 10 more years."

"I want to be done in the next five, six years. So then, during that time, I'm fine being home a lot. I'm a chill dude. I want to raise my kids."

This isn't new from Porter. He's talked about making the NBA a year-to-year decision every offseason, based not on love for the game but on his health.

Porter underwent two back surgeries before ever playing an NBA game and a third in 2021-22. He has to wear a custom ankle-foot orthosis brace on his left leg every game to compensate for drop foot and nerve damage.

The Nets know his medicals better than anyone, and Porter knows his mind better than anybody. Whether they can reach common ground will bear watching, as well as when and for how much.

brian.lewis@nypost.com



Jason Szentes

Bruise is a lucky break for Bengie

By MIKE PUMA

PITTSBURGH — Carson Bengie received a break Saturday, but not the kind that appears likely to send him to the injured list.

The rookie outfielder was diagnosed with a bone bruise, a day after he jammed his left wrist while completing a sliding catch in left field. Bengie was removed from the game with discomfort in the wrist and X-rays were negative. Imaging on Saturday indicated the bone bruise, interim manager Andy Green said before the Mets' 9-0 loss to the Pirates.

METS NOTES

It left the Mets without one of their hottest hitters for the short term, but likely in position to reinstate him into the lineup within the next few days.

"I knew something didn't feel right, and after probably 10 seconds it kind of wore off," Bengie said of his collision with the left field fence at PNC Park. "Then when I got back in the dugout and all of the adrenaline kind of wore off, it kind of lit back up again."

The play was the latest defensive gem for the 23-year-old Bengie, who has shined offensively and defensively.

➤ The Mets activated infielder **Gabriel Arias** and optioned **Eric Waganan** to Triple-A Syracuse. Arias was claimed off waivers from the Guardians on Friday, two days after he was designated for assignment.

"I think he provides us a greater measure of defensive versatility than Eric Waganan does," Green said. "We really like Wags' bat, but given who we have at DH and first base it's hard to find him consistent opportunity. Gabe gives us an opportunity to rest the regulars on the left side — if **Francisco [Lindor]** needs a day off and even some of the games where you get a blowout situation and you get somebody off their feet."

mpuma@nypost.com

STAY OR GO? Michael Porter Jr. is the Nets' most valuable asset. Tuesday's deadline will impact his trade eligibility next season. The team and player need to figure out if he will sign an extension, if they plan to trade him or if he will retire.

Jason Szentes

Snub shrug

Ionescu not bitter after being left off U.S. World Cup team

By HOWIE KUSSOY

Sabrina Ionescu is taking the snub in stride. After winning gold medals with Team USA in the 2024 Olympics and the 2022 FIBA World Cup, the four-time All-Star and former No. 1 overall pick said she was “kind of” surprised to learn Thursday she was not selected to join the national team for the upcoming World Cup in Berlin.

“[I’m] disappointed, of course,” Ionescu said Saturday. “That’s obviously something that I wanted to participate in, but I think it’s just maturity, like, I understand how difficult it is. I’m excited for a lot of the new faces that get to go and have the opportunity to do the World Cup. I’ve done it already, so it didn’t rub me the wrong way. I really understand the honor it is to wear the jersey and I’ve been able to win a gold medal, so I’m very blessed.”

“I know I’ve kind of dealt with some injuries, and obviously there’s so much talent, so you kind of never know, it could go any way. So I don’t know if surprised is the right word. It just is what it is.”

Ionescu, 28, is one of five players from the 2024 Olympic roster who will not return for the World Cup, having been excluded in favor of a younger, star-studded group of first-time additions (Caitlin Clark, Paige Bueckers, Angel Reese, Aliyah Boston and Rhyné Howard).

Breanna Stewart — a three-time Olympic gold medalist and three-time World Cup winner — was a lock to rejoin Team USA. She thought her Liberty teammate was, too.

“I think that for her to be left off the World Cup roster, I was surprised,” Stewart said. “Definitely not a nice feeling for her, but I feel like she’s taking it in a positive way. She’s talked about [she’s] gonna use this time to make sure [she’s] really healthy and ready for our playoff push and those types of things.”

Ionescu, who participated in the national team’s training camp in April, was informed of the decision by Sue Bird, USA Basketball’s senior women’s national team managing director, but the Liberty star said she was not given much clarity regarding why she was passed over.

So, her attention now turns to the Liberty’s stretch run — and the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles.

“I think just for me it’s obviously staying confident in my abilities, knowing obviously my goal is to play LA ’28, and kind of just using it

to continue to get better,” Ionescu said. “I’m gonna show up to everything I possibly can as long as my body allows it. ... Any time I get a chance to represent the U.S. I’m going to be there.”

“I’m not a jealous person or someone that you feel like maybe you failed or didn’t accomplish something, and you come out and you bad-mouth and you’re mad. For me, it’s about uplifting the players that did make the team, and honestly, showcasing to so many young girls and young boys what it looks like when maybe you didn’t accomplish something that you set your mind on doing, but how you can continue to put your best foot forward and keep striving for what your goals are and what you want to achieve while also being a good person.”



HIGH ROAD TAKEN: Sabrina Ionescu was surprised she wasn't selected for Team USA in the World Cup. But Ionescu insisted she was "disappointed" but not bitter.

Getty Images

Veteran's release leaves void for ex-Liberty teammates

By HOWIE KUSSOY

Barclays Center will be packed Sunday for a blockbuster matinee — a rematch of the Commissioner's Cup title game, a battle of the past two WNBA champions, an opportunity for the Liberty to avenge their only loss of the past three weeks.

But the battle against four-time MVP A'ja Wilson and the Aces will come without “the heart” of the Liberty, who waived Betnijah

Laney-Hamilton on Thursday — ending the guard's six-season run in New York — then saw the former All-Star get claimed off waivers by the Washington Mystics on Saturday.

“Betnijah’s a tremendous player and a tremendous person,” Liberty head coach Chris DeMarco said following Saturday’s practice. “She meant a lot to this organization and still does. I know it was really difficult trying to find the right trade partners for her and

still in the end, we wanted to give her an opportunity where she’s able to contribute and have a larger role and that’s why we got to this point.”

“Even at the start of the season, she expressed if there’s other opportunities, she wanted to look at those. It came to the point, just as a team we all understood what this is and what we’re trying to accomplish. For her, it was trying to find her the right place where she can succeed and feel good.

“Coming off a major injury ... it was a tough year all-around for her. ... It’s just one of those things where she felt like she wanted another opportunity and we did our best to try to help her.”

Laney-Hamilton, a starter on the 2024 title team, missed all of last season with a knee injury, then struggled to find her form under a new head coach.

Despite opening the season as a starter, Laney-Hamilton, 32, had fallen out of

the rotation over the past four weeks and hadn’t played in eight straight games. This season she saw her fewest minutes (16.8) in eight years, averaging 4.7 points, 1.9 rebounds and 1.5 assists, while shooting 36.2 percent from the field.

Cutting ties with Laney-Hamilton allowed the Liberty to sign developmental player Marine Fauthoux to a multi-year contract.

But the roster still has a hole that cannot be filled.

“She’s been the heart of this team even well before I got here, and I think that it’s really sad to see her go, and I know a lot of people are having that similar sentiment,” Breanna Stewart said. “She’s just been someone who’s uplifting, even when she’s not been on the court while dealing with injury, and she’s a bright spot that we’ll definitely miss.”

“B was so New York, you know? The toughness, the grit, the determination.”

hkussoy@nypost.com



Colston Loveland

Getty Images (4)

ENDS OF THE DAY

Where to find best 'tight' spots in draft

In the second of a six-part fantasy draft preview series, *Fantasy Insanity* examines tight ends. Next week: quarterbacks.

THIS PLAYER, over his final four games last season (including playoffs), totaled 48 targets, 28 receptions, 378 yards and a pair of touchdowns?

Name that player. No, it wasn't Puka Nacua or Jason Smith-Njigba or Ja'Marr Chase. In fact, it wasn't even a wide receiver.

This player was ranked eighth overall in PPR fantasy scoring the final two weeks of the NFL regular season. No, it wasn't Trey McBride. Brock Bowers was out. And no, it wasn't Travis Kelce. And Tony Gonzalez and Antonio Gates have been retired for a while.

It was ... Colston Loveland. The same Colston Loveland who averaged 8.5 points per game over the first 16 weeks — 17th among tight ends.

The same who led all tight ends with 23.3 points per game in Weeks 17-18, nearly five points better than any other at his position. (Congrats, McBride! You were second.)

When it came down to the nitty-gritty, when it was crunch time in the regular season the final two weeks, Loveland caught 16 passes on 23 targets for 185 yards and two touchdowns. In two playoffs games to follow,

he amassed a combined 12 catches on 25 targets for 193 yards.

These aren't just TE1 numbers, they are top-tier wide receiver numbers. Why on earth would he not be ranked at the top of TE board this year, considering how he finished his rookie season?

First, let's say: Slow your roll, Eager Beaver. That is a four-game sample size. But also, yes, you are right to be excited. Maybe just not *that* excited.

Here's the thing: We love us some Loveland. And there is a version of reality where we can see him being the TE1 this season. But by no means is that a guarantee.

Plus, to get a piece of that potential reality, you have to spend a pick sometimes in the fourth round. That is expensive for any

tight end, much less one whose foundation is a four-game sample size.

Unless you want to make a huge TE investment by going after Brock Bowers or McBride in the first 2-3 rounds, this is your next target tier. That makes Loveland attractive, because he is slightly cheaper, but if you wait a round or two, you can get someone with similar projected production for a lower draft cost.

Instead of jumping to Loveland that early, what the Fantasy Madman often does instead is use him as a marker. Once Loveland is drafted — often with a pick in the early 40s — we set our sights on Tyler Warren or Harold Fannin Jr.

This lets us get a slightly more reliable option at running back or wide receiver in the earlier round. Like, we likely have a shot at solid WR2 options WRs Garrett Wilson or Tetairoa McMillan. But if we take Loveland, those guys are going to be gone, and we'll have to settle for something like Carnell Tate or Marvin Harrison Jr. a round or two later. We think that is a steeper WR cliff between those options than we do the TEs in that range.

Warren routinely goes about a round later than Loveland. But if he

happens to slip into the 60s, we're game. If he gets taken, that's when we snipe Fannin.

Both have pitfalls: Warren depends on health of QB Daniel Jones and if he is healthy, then you're dependent on quality performance from Jones. That is harder for Giants fans, who vividly remember Jones' struggles with Big Blue.

Word out of Indianapolis is Jones looks great coming off an Achilles injury. Based on his production last season, that lessens any Warren fears — especially with the departure of WR Michael Pittman Jr. and Alec Pierce being on the PUP list with an ankle problem.

With Fannin, you worry about the QB situation. But it's Cleveland, so you always worry about the QB situation. He finished TE5 last season despite routine Browns QB play (terrible). What if the combination of Deshaun Watson and Shedeur Sanders elevates the QB play to merely "bad" this season? That could be great for Fannin!

You want to grab Fannin at this point, because otherwise you end up having to go back to the Kyle Pitts well (speaking of QB problems ...) or lean on George Kittle's health (good luck) in nearby rounds.

Instead, if we miss on Warren/Fannin, we would wait the jump on Isaiah Likely a round early — which means Round 8 instead of 9.

The point being: Don't panic. There are always some tight end surprises. Plus, unless you're willing to spend hefty draft capital on presumed "sure things" (reminder: Bowers was just TE8 last season), it gets pretty murky pretty fast in the tight end draft pool. So almost everyone will be wading through some degree of muck.

Swim smart, my fantasy friends.

dloftis@nypost.com



Drew Loftis

Fantasy Insanity



Harold Fannin Jr.

Tyler Warren

Insanity insider The Madman's DVQ rates the top tight ends, kickers and DSTs:

DVQ identifies the pick in the draft at which each player's projected point value meets his draft value.

Tight ends					
Rank.	Player	TM	POS	DVQ	ADP
1.	Brock Bowers	LV	TE	58.8	18.2
2.	Trey McBride	ARI	TE	62.0	19.6
3.	Colston Loveland	CHI	TE	74.5	41.7
4.	Tyler Warren	IND	TE	75.4	50.8
5.	Harold Fannin Jr.	CLE	TE	78.5	73.6
6.	Sam LaPorta	DET	TE	85.6	81.2
7.	George Kittle	SF	TE	88.3	98.4
8.	Travis Kelce	KC	TE	89.9	105.2
9.	Kyle Pitts	ATL	TE	91.3	74.6
10.	Tucker Kraft	GB	TE	104.6	83.1



Tight ends					
Rank.	Player	TM	POS	DVQ	ADP
11.	Mark Andrews	BAL	TE	112.7	118.6
12.	Jake Ferguson	DAL	TE	113.0	111.1
13.	Juwan Johnson	NO	TE	129.8	145.2
14.	Dalton Kincaid	BUF	TE	134.6	116.5
15.	Dallas Goedert	PHI	TE	136.3	116.5
16.	David Njoku	LAC	TE	138.7	202.1
17.	Chig Okonkwo	WAS	TE	138.8	148.0
18.	Hunter Henry	NE	TE	140.0	145.4
19.	T.J. Hockenson	MIN	TE	144.1	158.4
20.	Oronde Gadsden	LAC	TE	144.2	147.8

Kickers					
Rank.	Player	TM	POS	DVQ	ADP
1.	Brandon Aubrey	DAL	K	94.0	165.0
2.	Ka'imi Fairbairn	HOU	K	120.7	195.4
3.	Jason Myers	SEA	K	121.1	191.8
4.	Cameron Dicker	LAC	K	121.7	145.0
Defense/special teams					
Rank.	Player	TM	POS	DVQ	ADP
1.	Seahawks	SEA	DST	120.6	202
2.	Texans	HOU	DST	120.8	167.8
3.	Broncos	DEN	DST	195.8	175.0
4.	Rams	LAR	DST	121.0	170.3

Sam LaPorta

Getty Images (2)

Eye coordinators to craft TE plan

THE MODERN NFL offensive evolution is breathing fresh life into one of fantasy football's most volatile positions: the tight end. As creative head coaches and offensive coordinators across the league embrace multi-tight end personnel packages at unprecedented rates, fantasy football managers stand to reap immense rewards in upcoming drafts.

Historically, fantasy managers feared multi-tight end formations, worrying that additional tight ends on the field meant diluted target shares and fewer opportunities. However, modern offensive schemes deploy 12- and 13-personnel to achieve structural balance rather than conservative play-calling.

Nowhere is this tactical shift more promising than with the Lions, who hired Drew Brees and his new offensive coordinator. Fantasy managers witnessed firsthand what Petzing's tight end-heavy scheme accomplished for Trey McBride in Arizona, turning him into a high-volume target monster. Though you cannot automatically assume Sam LaPorta will command an identical target share to McBride, Petzing's arrival signals a clear path toward an expanded workload and increased targets.

The Lions' offensive framework will allow LaPorta to operate as a primary receiving engine rather than just an intermediate option. Provided LaPorta returns to 100 percent health following his offseason back surgery, his natural receiving talents paired with Petzing's tight end-friendly offense give him massive fantasy potential and top-tier upside.

For managers seeking high-upside value deeper in drafts, look to the Chargers and second-year playmaker Oronde Gadsden. LA's "other" team brought in offensive mastermind Mike McDaniel as their new coordinator, a play-caller renowned for maximizing tight end production. From designing elite usage for George Kittle in San Francisco to elevating Jonnu Smith into a versatile playmaker in Miami, McDaniel's schemes consistently prioritize dynamic tight ends in open space.

The Chargers' offseason roster construction lays out the scheme perfectly. Los Angeles brought in Charlie Kolar specifically to serve as their in-line, blocking tight end. With Kolar handling heavy protection reps at the line of scrimmage, Gadsden is primed to be the primary pass-catcher in multi-TE formations, even edging out veteran David Njoku for route participation on passing downs. Gadsden's wide receiver background paired with McDaniel's motion-heavy system gives him incredible sleeper potential late in drafts.

Keep a close eye on LaPorta's health reports and Gadsden's preseason usage, as both tight ends are primed to break out in their new offensive systems.

Howard Bender is the head of content at FantasyAlarm.com. Follow him on X @rotobuzzguy and catch him on the award-winning "Fantasy Alarm Radio Show" on the SiriusXM fantasy sports channel weekdays from 6-8 p.m. Go to FantasyAlarm.com for all your fantasy football news and advice.



FANTASY ALARM
Howard Bender



Oronde Gadsden

By ROB MAADDI

CANTON, Ohio — Drew Brees stood on stage next to his bronze bust, in front of Who Dat Nation, and took his place in the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Getting benched three times in the NFL helped him get there.

"Marty Schottenheimer, one of the greatest coaches and motivators to ever coach this game and who belongs here in Canton," Brees said Saturday. "Marty was my biggest fan. He would tell me all the time, even as he benched me three times and made me fight for my job every year with two greats, Doug Flutie and Phil Rivers."

"The first two times I got benched, I deserved it. The third time, I still don't think I deserved it, Coach. But nonetheless, it lit more than a fire. It forced me to access a place in my mind and heart that I had not yet been. The adversity was not expected, but very necessary. I would never have reached the heights I did without it. I knew I needed to play better, but more importantly, I knew he believed I would play better."

Brees eventually left the San Diego Chargers and joined the New Orleans Saints, where he won a Super Bowl playing for coach Sean Payton and became one of the most prolific passers in NFL history, to the delight of fans who filled the Superdome with chants of "Who dat?"

Brees has the second-most yards passing (80,358) and touchdown passes (571) in league history, behind only Tom Brady.

Larry Fitzgerald

Fitzgerald was the first player to have his bronze bust revealed on stage Saturday at Tom Benson Stadium.

5 more join immortals at football HOF



DREW BREES
Enshrined in Canton

urday at Tom Benson Stadium.

The 11-time Pro Bowl wide receiver, who played his entire 17-year career for the Cardinals, was introduced by the oldest of his three sons, Devin.

He finished his speech with a message to his boys that's applicable to everyone.

"Don't just pursue excellence for yourself," Fitzgerald said. "Help other people pursue it, too. That's the part of this story that matters the most. Not the likes. Not the fame. But the people you travel with. The values you uphold. In the end, it's not just about the excellence. It's about the people who help get you there."

Fitzgerald is second on the NFL's career list in receptions (1,432) and receiving

yards (17,492). His 121 touchdown catches are sixth.

Adam Vinatieri

Vinatieri became only the third full-time placekicker to be inducted into the Hall, joining Jan Stenerud and Morten Andersen.

Vinatieri retired with NFL records of 2,673 career points and 599 field goals. Only George Blanda (26) and Andersen (25) had longer NFL careers than Vinatieri's 24 seasons.

Luke Kuechly

At 35, Kuechly became the second-youngest player inducted into the Hall. Chicago Bears running back Gale Sayers was 34 when he was inducted in 1977.

Known for his intense study habits, Kuechly was a five-time All-Pro linebacker, the 2012 AP Defensive Rookie of the Year and 2013 AP Defensive Player of the Year during his eight-year career with the Carolina Panthers. Kuechly decided to retire in part to preserve his brain health after suffering several concussions.

Roger Craig

Craig, who revealed in a video speech that he has vascular dementia, became the first player in NFL history to have 1,000 yards rushing and 1,000 yards receiving in a season. — AP

49ers legend reveals dementia

By THOMAS L. MURRAY

During the Pro Football Hall of Fame ceremony Saturday in Canton, Ohio, San Francisco 49ers legendary running back Roger Craig revealed that he has been diagnosed with vascular dementia.

Craig, who turned 66 in July, delivered the news of his illness in a prerecorded video during the ceremony. He also said doctors indicated his dementia could be related to a concussion he sustained during his playing career.

"Two things can be true,"

Craig said. "Football gave me opportunities beyond anything I could imagine. It helped shape the man I became. At the same time, we know more today about brain health than when I played, and I hope sharing my story encourages

people to pay attention to their health and seek help when something doesn't feel right."

He said he shared his diagnosis to help others.

"The changes were gradual," Craig said. "At first,



ROGER CRAIG

they were easy to dismiss as normal aging. Over time, my family noticed it, too. Ultimately, it led us to seek answers from my doctor."

Saturday's induction into the Hall of Fame was long overdue for Craig, who waited 28 years to receive the sport's highest individual honor.

Craig had an 11-year NFL career, playing eight seasons with the 49ers, one season with the Los Angeles Raiders and two with the Minnesota Vikings.

By BRIAN COSTELLO

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — It's a humid Tennessee morning and Jermaine Johnson is torturing his Titans offensive teammates.

Johnson, the former Jets edge rusher, seems to be living in the backfield of the offense on this day. He gets in the face of quarterback Cam Ward but stops short, knowing he can't touch him. He turns to face the offensive coaches on the sideline and gives them a thumbs down, indicating another sack.

Johnson looks confident and ready for a big season. He's been reunited with coach Robert Saleh, the man who drafted him in New York, after an offseason trade.

"It's good to be back," Johnson told The Post after practice. "It's good to be in this defense that I missed so very much. And it's good to be around a lot of people I regard as family. It's just good to be ... I want to say be back in the building, because that's what it sort of feels like because that was my first coaching change. Nothing against any of those guys. I mean, [Jets coach Aaron Glenn] definitely, [Jets GM Darren Mougey] just all love for everybody on that side, but these are the guys that drafted me and it just feels good to be back here."

The Jets traded Johnson to the Titans in February, getting nose tackle T'Vondre Sweat in return. It felt like a smart trade for both sides. Johnson did not fit Glenn's defense and Sweat did not fit Saleh's.

"I know it worked out for me," Johnson said with a smile.

Johnson was part of the Jets' ballyhooed 2022 draft class that also featured Sauce Gardner, Garrett Wilson and Breece Hall. It felt like a foundational draft for the team, but four years later, Johnson and Gardner have been traded away.

Johnson said he had no issues with Glenn last year but he's happy to be back with Saleh.

"I have all the respect for A.G.," Johnson said. "I know he worked his butt off and in terms of first-time head coach and making all the right moves and the right calls and everything like that. There was not ever any kind of grinding gears with A.G. Not ever. It all



JERMAINE ATTRACTION: Jermaine Johnson has looked dominant in practice for the Titans after an offseason from the Jets. He says he didn't fit in Aaron Glenn's scheme last season and is excited to back in Robert Saleh's defense. *Imagn Images*

Ex-Jets edge Johnson thrilled to be playing for Saleh again in Tennessee

worked good. It all worked out for everybody. It was a player-for-player trade, right? They got a guy that was great for their scheme. And the Titans got a guy that's good for their scheme. So, I really don't think there was bad blood in this trade at all."

Saleh was thrilled to get Johnson back in his defense. He is one of several familiar faces now in Tennessee. Johnson will be playing under defensive line coach Aaron Whitecotton, his position coach with the Jets. On the opposite side

of the defensive line is John Franklin-Myers, with whom he spent two years in New York. Between those two is Jeffery Simmons, maybe the best defensive tackle in the NFL.

"Jermaine looks like he's on a mission," Saleh said. "He's in elite shape. Our D-line room is awesome. We've got a lot of alphas in there, and he's one of them. I'm really looking forward to seeing how he attacks this season. I can tell you he's already attacked it. I'm hoping the results match

what the effort's been."

Johnson is two years removed from the torn Achilles that ended his 2024 season. He did not always look like himself last year with the Jets as he returned from the injury.

"I didn't feel bad a year ago, but now I feel like I can demand things of my body that I used to and it happens like it used to," Johnson said. "I feel really good right now."

Johnson said he does not care that the Jets are the Week 1 opponent for the Titans. He said he has other motivations this season.

Johnson will be a free agent after this season and a big year could result in a big payday.

He did say he can't wait to see Jets fans.

"A lot of love for New York and the fans," Johnson said. "They showed me nothing but love even after the injury. There was a lot of love coming from New York. They'll never, ever get any bad things to say out of my mouth about them. Part of me will always miss them. I know I'll have some fans from New York here in Nashville Week 1, some of my fans. So, I'm going to try my best to seek all of you guys out and sign whatever I can, because I really do appreciate all the love I got when I was there."

brian.costello@nypost.com

Raiders suspend Cousins, Crosby after camp scuffle

By MARK HENDERSON

HENDERSON, Nev. — Raiders quarterback Kirk Cousins and defensive end Maxx Crosby were suspended from team drills at practice Saturday following their fight the day before, giving rookie QB Fernando Mendoza his first opportunity in training camp to run

the starting offense.

"We have very clear expectations about how we want to practice, how you go about our business," coach Klint Kubiak said. "We violated that yesterday, so we held those guys out. That's all I'm going to say about it. We addressed it with the team and we're moving on."

Cousins and Crosby had

to be separated by teammates after the fight. The 37-year-old quarterback appeared upset that Crosby tipped his pass, forcing an incompletion, and then charged the 6-foot-5, 256-pound defensive end, who is three inches taller and 42 pounds heavier.

The Raiders are off Sunday before returning Mon-

day morning, so their starting quarterback and star pass rusher will compete against each other again, though, Kubiak hopes, without any punches.

With Cousins watching Saturday, Mendoza — the Heisman Trophy winner at Indiana who was taken first overall in the NFL draft — threw touchdown passes to

tight ends Brock Bowers and Michael Mayer and wide receiver Tre Tucker.

He also had some misfires while facing the starting defense for the first time, but showed agility in eluding pressure to find open receivers.

"Fernando continues to improve, and the thing I think we're very pleased

about is from spring to the start of camp, there were some parts of this game we wanted him to improve upon and he has as we've added different layers and dimensions," quarterbacks coach Mike Sullivan said. "He's not repeating mistakes, which is always a good thing. It's a long process."

— AP

Jets kick return specialist Isaiah Williams fields some training camp Q&A from Post NFL columnist Steve Serby.

Q: Do the doubters you've had all your life motivate you even now?

A: I would say back then it most definitely motivated me. I remember when I was in college, coming in as a big-time recruit as a quarterback at the University of Illinois, had a lot of expectations, and I remember I was just in so much social media and I just used to see everything. Like, I used to see, like, "Oh, he's not this, he's not that." I used to, like, literally screen shot all the tweets, and at one point I made it my screen saver (smile). At the time, I would say it motivated me somewhat to prove them wrong, but I think at this point in my life, I don't really look to prove anybody right or wrong. So no matter what people say or don't say, it doesn't really bother me.

Q: You said in your "Origins" video that you went through anxiety and depression. How long did that last and how bad was it?

A: It was pretty bad. It started around my freshman year at Illinois. I want to say it peaked around my sophomore year. ... I would never say I was really, like, suicidal, but it was times where I would tell myself, "I would rather not wake up and have to go do what I gotta do tomorrow." I got to the point where I was nervous to talk to people. ... I would go out to the field and somebody could be 5, 10 yards from me and I would throw the ball to the ground. It was almost like my body was paralyzed, like, I couldn't really do what I knew I could do. But I was just believing all these lies, that I wasn't good enough. ... I tried everything — I tried meditation, I tried reading books, you name it. ... I tried drinking. ... I wasn't drinking too much, but I was trying to do anything to just ease the pain. And nothing was working. Everything just felt like a Band-Aid. ... I ended up getting invited to church early on during my college career. The pastor was also our team chaplain, he invited a group of us over. He just gave me a bunch of Bibles. ... One day, like, someone was just telling me, "Just open it up, start reading." ... I stopped listening to the lies, and I stopped listening to what everybody else thought I was, and who God says I am. That's when things started to change,

SERBY'S SUNDAY Q&A WITH ...

Isaiah WILLIAMS

when I stopped believing the lies.

Q: What was the worst lie you read about yourself?

A: Even sometimes to myself, just thoughts coming up like, "Not good enough." ... People saying like, "Oh you're too short." ... Then you have a bad game you get it the worst, like, "We hate you. Kill yourself." If that's your motivation, you're gonna feed into that stuff. That's why I say at one point in my life that was my motivation. But now that's no longer my motivation. That don't give me no fuel no matter what nobody says about me 'cause I know who I am, I know my identity.

Q: What's your motivation now?

A: My motivation now is to glorify God in all that I do. I just got married closing on a year now.

Q: What's her name?

A: Samantha. ... Just wanting to start a family, and wanting to be the best leader, example that I could be for my family. I want to do things that we never seen growing up. When we do have kids, I want to raise them in the way of the Lord. I want to be a great example for them for them to look up to. And then, as far as on the football field, I want to be a great example for my brothers. I care about them bigger than football. I want us to be a great football team. I want to be a light.

Q: Would you buy a ticket to watch Isaiah Williams play football?

A: (Chuckle)) Hundred percent. ... As a kid, that's something I always looked forward to, being an exciting football player, you know like when you make a move, make somebody miss and the crowd goes crazy, or you score a touchdown and the crowd goes crazy ... excitement and explosive.

Q: Do you study returners?

A: When I was in Detroit I had the perfect opportunity to learn under Kalif Raymond. The way that I practice, the way that I do everything, I attribute a lot of that to what I learned from him, what I learned from being around Amon-Ra St. Brown. I wouldn't say I wanted to be a returner most definitely coming out of college ... just seeing what you can do when you just buy into it. ... During the season I'm always keeping up on guys, not to compete with them but just to see how are they making explosive plays. [Marvin] Mims with the Broncos, I watched him last offseason when I was in Cincinnati, he always got a high average. I was like man, what is he doing?

Q: Punt return?

A: Punt return-wise ... Guy from the Vikings [Myles Price], he was a rookie ... of course the Tennessee Titans [Chimere Dike], he was All-Pro.

Q: What do you prefer, punt return or kickoff return?

A: (Smile) Either one. Whichever one I can get the ball in my hand (laugh). They're two different skill sets though. Kick return more downfield, punt return more like ... well both of 'em you kind of got to set it up. I like both of 'em.

Q: Don't you have to be a little crazy to do punt return?

A: You do. Just having to track that ball for so long knowing that these guys running 21, 22 miles per hour at you full speed, like, you can't really

see them 'cause you gotta worry about catching the ball first, and then once you catch the ball, you gotta be quick on your feet ... or you're gonna get lit up (chuckle).

Q: Did you ever have fear when you first started?

A: A hundred percent (laugh). But I feel that goes back to when my identity changed and when I got rid of all that.

Q: What kind of impact do you think you can make as a wide receiver?

A: I believe I can make a huge impact. I believe I could be a game-changer.

Q: Do you miss quarterback?

A: Sometimes. 'Cause you got the ball in your hands every single play (laugh).

Q: Tell coach Aaron Glenn you could do the Wildcat.

A: I might have to (laugh).

Q: Three dinner guests?

A: Jesus, Kobe Bryant, Paul the Apostle.

Q: Favorite movie?

A: "Like Mike."

Q: Favorite meal?

A: I love chicken wings, any type of wings, but I'm gonna go something untraditional. I'm gonna go meat loaf and mashed potatoes.

Q: Can this team surprise people?

A: Yeah. ... [There's] a lot of talent on this team. A lot of talent. I think also we got the leaders in the building to put it all together. Being able to put it all together and just the mentality, and I feel like we're building that every single day.



Robert Sabo; Bill Kostroun

COMING OF GAUGE

EYES ON AARON:

Aaron Glenn will be under the microscope this season. His performance, though, should be based more on how the team looks than on wins and losses.

AP

Glenn needs to show real growth — if not wins — in 2nd season as Jets evaluate coach's future

EVERYTHING about the Jets feels like a build toward 2027. Everything except ... the head coach.

Aaron Glenn is in a weird world where it feels like everyone who follows the Jets knows that while the 2026 team should be improved from last year's dismal showing, there are no real expectations for this group. All of the organization's hopes are tied to the offseason when general manager Darren Mougey will be armed with three first-round picks and around \$80 million in salary cap space.

Still, the question I get more than any others from Jets fans is: How many games does Aaron Glenn have to win to keep his job?

To me, this is not the right question. I don't think there is a set number, nor should there be. If we all acknowledge that the Jets are still in the early to middle stages of a rebuild, then Glenn should get some wiggle room this year. I know that won't be popular with people who were disgusted watching the Jets go 3-14 in his first year on the job.

But Glenn's future is not about the number of wins and losses he has this year. It's about how it looks. He can't go 3-14 again. There's no way that can look good. But what if he goes 6-11 and you feel like this is a team on the rise at the end of the year? What if David Bailey is a Defensive Rookie of the Year candidate? What if Frank Reich's offense looks like a competent NFL offense, which we haven't seen from the Jets in more than a decade? What if Glenn has the defense playing well and the core that Glenn and Mougey have assembled over the past 18 months is coming together? What if the Jets are losing close games?



Brian Costello

Here's the key for Glenn: It can't be embarrassing this year. There were too many things about 2025 that made Gang Green turn red with embarrassment. Glenn can't have a game like he did in London against the Broncos when he looked like he had no idea how to manage the end of the half. Glenn's defense can't go another season without an interception. The leading receiver needs more than 395 yards. It can never, ever look like it did in the last five weeks again when they looked like the JV playing the varsity.

To Glenn's credit, he did not just come into 2026 saying what he did worked and he was not making any changes. He overhauled his staff. They moved on from some players. Glenn now wisely has taken over play-calling duties on defense.

"Each year, I don't want to say [you] change, but I say [you] pivot," Glenn said. "When you see things that you have to improve on, when you see tough decisions that you have to make, you've got to pivot."

Pivot is a good word.

Glenn is still himself, as he should be. There's a reason that he became the Jets head coach. He has been a very successful coach in the NFL. Glenn drew some chuckles this offseason when he said play-calling was his super power. It may be.

From covering him for the last year and half, I think his super

power is his confidence. Imagine how confident a human being you have to be to become an NFL player. Now, imagine how confident you have to be to become an All-Pro cornerback when you are 5-foot-9. How many doubters has Glenn proved wrong along the way? How many people told him he was not big enough to play Texas high school football, big-time college football at Texas A&M, never mind play well in the NFL.

Glenn now has plenty of doubters as a head coach. He enters the 2026 season being evaluated on a different timeline than everything else about the Jets. There are people who are going to scream for him to be fired if they lose Week 1 to Robert Saleh and the Titans.

Coaches love to talk about valuing process over results. In the NFL, the reality for coaches is often it is only about results. No one cares about why you lost the game, just that you lost it. But this season for the Jets should be all about setting things up for success in 2027 when they are expected to draft their franchise quarterback.

Glenn should be judged accordingly. The question about Glenn this season should not be how many games does he need to win to keep his job. The evaluation is going to be about what those wins and losses look like and whether Glenn feels like the right leader to turn the Jets around in 2027.

brian.costello@nypost.com



By ZACH BRAZILLER

This was not a day for dreaming. It was a reality-check practice for an offense that envisions making major improvements this coming season.

The additions of Geno Smith at quarterback and two first-round skill-position draft picks (receiver Omar Cooper Jr. and tight end Kenyon Sadiq), along with the return of Breece Hall, Garrett Wilson and four-fifths of the offensive line, have created optimism in Florham Park.

Saturday afternoon, the Jets held an intrasquad scrimmage, and it looked like the same offense that has been annually one of the worst in the NFL. Smith struggled after a solid start and his lone touchdown pass should've been ruled a David Bailey sack. The offensive line had issues blocking the second overall pick in April's draft and dealing with blitzes. Penalties were a problem, especially as the hot morning wore on.

Afterward, Aaron Glenn spun the first-team offense's performance, crediting the unit with a fast start and quality finish. He thought both sides of the ball performed well. That was his interpretation.

"This was a 'thud day,' but it was a competitive day," he said. "Man, it really came out with our offense, I thought they did a really good job of starting fast and they were moving the ball pretty well. And then the defense picked it up right in between and those guys played really, really good. They executed exactly what I wanted them to execute. The pressures were really, really good, our guys were dialed in."

Later, Glenn said he would need to watch the film to offer a more in-depth analysis of the offense.

It should be noted that Sadiq, expected to be a major part of this offense, is still out after a setback from his hernia operation. Wilson, the star No. 1 Jets receiver, sat out the first few drives. Smith has enjoyed a mostly strong training camp and there have been days the offense, under new coordinator Frank Reich, has gotten the better of the defense. But that didn't happen on this day.

"Good in a lot of areas and not so

'0' no! A step back on offense

good in some others, but that's what this time is for, working out some of the penalties and things like that," center Josh Myers said, when asked how he would describe the offense's performance. "Up-and-down day, I thought."

Smith finished 12-for-20 for 157 yards and a touchdown. But had it been a real game, he might never have gotten the touchdown pass off, as Bailey was right there for the sack. The 36-yard throw was deflected by safety Minkah Fitzpatrick, but Isaiah Williams was there in the back of the end zone to haul it in. On the first-team offense's third series there was a delay-of-game penalty, followed by three incompletions.

On the following drive, Braelon Allen turned a short completion into a long gain, all the way to the 4-yard line, but the drive stalled.

During three red zone series, Smith was sacked twice and the defense dominated. The following series started at the 10, and after three straight runs, there were two false starts.

On Friday, Reich raved about what he has seen so far, from

Smith to his receivers, running backs and offensive line. He saved his highest praise for Smith.

"Obviously, at quarterback, Geno's a leader, he's a leader of the offense, make no mistake about it, in every way, shape and form," he said. "This man is laser focused like people don't understand. Like he comes to work, he comes to work and he's locked in. And I feel like the whole offense plays off of that, that's a really big deal."

Saturday wasn't Smith's best day. The offense similarly struggled.

It, of course, was just one practice. The Jets figure to learn more about this unit next week in their joint practices against the Buccaneers.

"That's the good thing about joint practices,"

Glenn said, "is you get to test what you do against another team."

zbraziller@
nypost.
com

THROWN FOR A LOOP:

The Jets offense, expected to take a big step forward this season in part because of Geno Smith's presence at QB, had a rough day in an intrasquad scrimmage Saturday.

Bill Kostroun



MADE IN THE CADE

Cade Klubnik had a strong close to Saturday's scrimmage. He led the second-team offense to a touchdown during a two-minute drill, which included a 66-yard connection with Isaiah Williams. The rookie quarterback is battling journeyman **Bailey Zappe** to be **Geno Smith's** backup.

STUMBLING BLOCKERS

The offensive line had its issues, not only in blocking rookie edge rusher **David Bailey** but also in dealing with blitzes head coach and defensive play-caller **Aaron Glenn** dialed up. Safety **Minkah Fitzpatrick** came free on a blitz up the middle for a sack.

CAUGHT MY EYE

Last season, **John Simpson** was the enforcer on the Jets offensive line. Could that role fall to **Joe Tippmann** this year? The offensive guard got in cornerback **Azareye'h Thomas'** face after he was called for a personal foul for taking down wideout **Omar Cooper Jr.** with a horse collar.

INJURY REPORT

Bailey limped off late in practice with an ankle injury. Glenn doesn't believe it is serious, and Bailey was jogging on the sideline after being checked out. Safety **VJ Payne** (bone bruise) is expected to miss three to four weeks, according to Glenn. Defensive end **Kingsley Jonathan** is dealing with a thigh bruise, but Glenn expects him to be fine.

—Zach Braziller

Rookie Bailey 'day to day' with ankle injury

By ZACH BRAZILLER

David Bailey's terrific training camp has hit a potential speed bump.

The impressive edge rusher and second overall draft pick suffered what appeared to be a mild ankle injury late in Saturday's intrasquad scrimmage. It came at the tail end of yet another strong practice from Bailey, who had two would-have-been sacks and was frequently in the

JETS NOTES

offensive backfield. He gave starting left tackle Olu Fashanu fits.

It was unclear how Bailey hurt the ankle. After coming off the field, he received medical attention and was moving around on the sideline.

"I would say day to day, but let me make sure because ... he got up and I think he jogged off," coach Aaron Glenn said. "So, I would think it would be that."

The Jets are hoping Bailey can elevate a pass rush that was 31st in the league a year ago with 26 sacks. Last year at Texas Tech, he had 14.5 sacks.

► Nobody was happier to see the Jets add veteran safety **Minkah Fitzpatrick** in the offseason than Malachi Moore. The second-year safety grew up idolizing Fitzpatrick as a Trussville, Ala., native and Alabama football fan. Moore, a fourth-round pick one season ago, attended Alabama too.

"For him to be on the team now is crazy," he said. "Looking up to him coming out of high school, going to Alabama, he's all over the walls up there and everything."

"I told him this funny story: When I first got to college, my first couple of days there, coach [Nick] Saban was calling me Minkah in film. I'm like, 'Coach, it's Malachi.' In the back of my head, I'm thinking, if you're going to mess my name up, call me anybody, Minkah is pretty cool."

► It was another productive practice for return specialist/receiver **Isaiah Williams**. He caught a 36-yard touchdown pass from **Geno Smith** on a deflection and made four other receptions during the scrimmage.

"Even though I love the kick return and punt return ability, man there's some things he can do on our offense that, listen, we're going to have to give him the ball some way," Glenn said. "We got to figure out a way to make sure that he's involved because he's an explosive player."

STOP: HAMMER

JUST think: As impressive as Arvell Reese was during the Giants' stay in West Virginia for his first NFL training camp, what he does best has yet to be seen.

Reese is known as a punisher as a hitter and as a tackler. Sure, once the pads came on there was contact in practice — especially a practice scripted by head coach John Harbaugh. As a rule, though, controlled contact is one level, whereas the collisions seen, felt and heard in an actual game are decidedly next level.

A glimpse of that next level was more than enough for Cam Skattebo.

Skattebo is, of course, a running back, designated with the RB abbreviation. It could also stand for Running Bulldozer, given the way the hydrant-shaped player — he is 215 pounds spread across a generously listed 5-foot-11 frame — is attracted to physical confrontation.

Well, during Friday's practice at the Sports Performance Center on The Greenbrier resort acreage, Reese in a run fit drilled Skattebo as the defender got the better of the duel. Skattebo slowly got back to his feet, went to the sideline and did not return to the field.

And that was Reese holding back from delivering the full hammer. Still, the "pop" could be heard as Reese delivered the blow.

"That's the best sound you can get," Reese said.

Earlier in camp, Skattebo made it clear that the dramatically enlarged inside linebacker duo of Reese and free agent signing Tremaine Edmunds is a sight to behold. Reese is 6-4 and 243 pounds, and Edmunds is the same height but slightly heavier at 251 pounds.

"I'm not saying I'm intimidated, but it does intimidate seeing those guys above [the offensive linemen] because, when your linebackers are engaged with your guards and you can see your linebackers' head, it's a little like, 'Oh s--t, he's there,'" Skattebo said.

Reese's intimidating power a sight to behold in camp

Reese is serious about fast-forwarding the rookie learning curve. He was not satisfied during Thursday's practice with the way he was getting downhill as a run defender. That is what he concentrated on improving the next day.

"As you watch the film, there's always something to pick up on to get better at and correct the next day," Reese said. "Every day, I'm looking to get 1 percent better at something."

The Giants were puzzled during the draft process that Reese in so many circles was evaluated as an edge rusher. They viewed him as a classic inside linebacker with the potential to develop into a strong pass rusher. Reese early during his time at Ohio State was no one's idea of a top 10 pick. He did not get a sack in six games as a freshman and managed only one half-sack in 16 games in 2024, lining up as a traditional linebacker. He was given more pass rush snaps in 2025 and responded with 6.5 sacks, inflating his worth. The Giants had him graded as the top player in the entire draft and were thrilled — and surprised — he was on the board for them at No. 5.

Thus far, Reese has done more than he has said, which is what the Giants expected out of him, given the all-business aura the 20-year-old gives off.

"That's who he is," running back Tyrone Tracy Jr. said. "You don't really have to say much to him. You literally just put him on the football field and let him work. I think a lot of his stuff is raw and natural. I think it's God-given."

Reese does not have to figure out much for himself, as there is all sorts of experience around him. Edmunds is entering his ninth NFL season, and Giants 2022 fifth-round pick Micah McFadden returns after hurting his foot in the 2025 season opener, which sent him to injured reserve. Harbaugh said earlier in camp that he feels as if he has three starters in Edmunds, Reese and McFadden.

Reese and Edmunds, though, take the first-team reps.

"He's been playing well the whole camp since he got here," Harbaugh said of Reese. "You see the talent, obviously. I think he's very sharp for a first-year guy. He gets things right pretty much all the time, makes very few mistakes. He's a very serious-minded guy, and he's very determined."

Edmunds is learning a new defense and getting acclimated to new teammates. He will wear the green-dot helmet, as defensive coordinator Dennard Wilson will relay the calls to Edmunds, who will deliver them to the entire defense. He and Reese will be a tandem the Giants hope will lead to a much-improved run defense (31st in the league last season), plenty of batted passes and thumping hits.

"I think the most impressive thing is that he wants to learn," Edmunds said. "And he knows ball. So at the end of the day, the ceiling is high for him. And he's out here working every day and he's putting it on display. So, he's going to be a good player for a while."

paul.schwartz@nypost.com



Paul Schwartz



UNLEASH THE BEAST: Rookie Arvell Reese brings "God-given" gifts to the field that make teammates, such as Tyrone Tracy Jr. (left), marvel at what he eventually will be able to do when his raw talent is refined at the pro level.

Corey Sipkin

Harbaugh: G-Men 'improved tremendously' in

By PAUL SCHWARTZ

The Giants got through their on-the-road portion of their summer preparation in fine shape.

They returned home Saturday after their 10th practice in a demanding 11-day stretch at The Greenbrier resort in White Sulphur Springs, W.Va., and the roster avoided any major injury issues, withstanding a

grueling schedule and workload during the first training camp under the auspices of new head coach John Harbaugh.

"I think we got a lot better," Harbaugh said after a final two-hour session at the Sports Performance Center. "That's probably what we got out of it. We improved tremendously. We're much further along than we were when we

GIANTS NOTES

started. I think we can look back and say that we've come a long way.

"The competition is really tough in this league, and every team is doing the same thing. So you're in a race every single day to be at least the best you can be. And ev-

erybody's trying to do the same thing in the NFL, so that's why it's so tough, but I thought our guys did a good job. I'm happy with where we're at. It's just a matter of keeping your head down and staying after it every day. Never taking a breath in terms of your mindset and determination to get better."

➤ Earlier in camp, Harbaugh said there would not

be any live contact action in full pads, unless he decided to do so with the young players on the roster. That went down on the final day, as Harbaugh did not ease off on getaway day, as promised. The third-team offense and defense went at it in a live goal-line period.

"It was good," Harbaugh said. "Young guys, goal-line period, live, tackling to the

ground. It was enthusiastic and fun, and I liked it."

➤ Injuries often lead to opportunities. Starting center **John Michael Schmitz** took a hit to the head Friday and backup **Lucas Patrick** is dealing with a knee issue.

That meant **Bryan Hudson** moved in with the starters on the offensive line. Hudson, 25, has been with the Giants since 2024,



West Virginia

mostly on the practice squad. Newly signed **Brenden Jaimes** also lined up at center in his first practice with the team.

Harbaugh said Schmitz continues to undergo tests for a possible concussion.

"I don't know if he's officially in the protocol or not," Harbaugh said. "They were looking at him this morning for symptoms. It wasn't anything terrible. So,

we'll just see how they classify him."

CB **Dru Phillips**, who left practice Friday with a sprained knee, worked on the side, an indication his physical issue is nothing serious. ... CB **Greg Newsome II** went down without contact and had to go to the sideline. He did not return to the action, but Harbaugh said it looks as if Newsome avoided anything serious.

Eye-opening season with Rodgers elevated Austin

By RYAN DUNLEAVY

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, W.Va. — When Jaxson Dart and Jameis Winston scramble away from pressure in Giants practice, they seem to have the same thought that advertising executives once had at Calvin Klein.

Calvin(s) or nothing.

Calvin Austin III, whose \$1.5 million signing created less buzz than four other free agent additions in the same receiver group, has become a go-to slot outlet under pressure as a fast learner of the playbook. Otherwise, throw the ball away.

"I think it's a great point," head coach John Harbaugh said. "Calvin has had a heck of a camp. He runs the routes really well. He gets open. He makes catches. He deserves some attention, no doubt. He's having a good camp so far."

Austin, 27, might be playing his way off the roster bubble with some help from things he picked up during the final season of his four with the Steelers, playing alongside Aaron Rodgers.

"He demands a lot, but that was probably the highest expectations I had playing football, and the most growth I ever had in life and football," Austin told The Post. "He never lowered the bar for anybody. I saw what it takes to do extra in terms of meetings."

"I saw what it takes to go into a game plan and know 100-something [hand] signals to be on the same page with him — not because he is trying to stress you out but because, if we connect with him, we're going to get a big play and help the team win. I saw what it takes for him to truly be great. Sometimes, it was me struggling to see the bright side of what he brings, but I'm so thankful to have been able to learn from him and I definitely owe a lot to him."

Austin, who missed his rookie season due to injury, totaled 1,100 receiving yards and averaged 8.9 yards per punt return — with a 2024 touchdown at the Giants' expense — over the next three seasons. He wanted more opportunity in free agency and found it by joining Harbaugh — a former enemy in the fierce Steelers-Ravens rivalry — as well as Dart and friends across the league (Isaiah Likely, Gunner Olszewski, Isaiah Hodgins and Greg Newsome II) who became new teammates.

"Anybody could tell you the Giants were the No. 1 team on my list because I saw the swagger, the composure, that thing you really can't teach and that mentality Jaxson Dart had," Austin said. "Coach Harbaugh was the icing on the cake. Being under his program is something I was eager to [do] because we competed against each other. Talking to those guys be-



LESSONS FROM A LEGEND: Slot receiver Calvin Austin III, who joined the Giants in the offseason after four years with the Steelers, credited his final year in Pittsburgh while catching passes from Aaron Rodgers as "the most growth I ever had in life and football."

Corey Sipkin

fore coming here was like, 'We can build something special and take this league by surprise.' One thing we're all about is work, and we're laying the foundation."

The Giants' pecking order at receiver after Malik Nabers — whenever he returns — is a wide-open race between Austin, Darius Slayton, Malachi Fields, Odell Beckham Jr., Darnell Mooney, Braxton Berrios, JuJu Smith-Schuster, Dalen Campbell and others. The third receiver is less important in Matt Nagy's tight-end and fullback-reliant offense than it was under Brian Daboll — for whom Wan'Dale Robinson earned 140 targets per year — but it's still a path to the field.

Displaying day-to-day consistency, Austin is surrounded by a rookie (Fields) trying to make a name for himself and a bunch of veterans fighting to prove all their best days aren't in the past.

"The name of the game is making plays," Austin said. "Of course, I want to be a 1,000-yard receiver and all of

that. That's what I strive toward every day, being a No. 1 receiver."

"Just being honest with myself, sometimes in the years past I feel like I was working and did some extra stuff, but being around a new team where everybody is competing to try to prove something took my focus to a new level. You can't just do extra. It's something even more — a mental and physical improvement to be locked into practice and transfer that to the game."

The 5-foot-9, 162-pound Austin is small by the standard of most of Harbaugh's receivers in Baltimore, but there is fight inside the package.

"You have to block on a Harbaugh team," Austin said. "Being that guy to get that block to spring a run or taking the top off the defense and catch big passes or be the guy who clears out [the defense] for an under. That's what I'm here to do."

Maybe he can pass along some secrets from Rodgers to Dart, too.

rdunleavy@nypost.com



**Pee Wee,
Carson get
their due**

LAST week's column on captains received a wonderful response (thank you!), but also highlighted two notable omissions who received considerable support: **James Devine:** Pee Wee. Reese. For shame, Michael ...

Joseph Koenig: Pee Wee Reese demonstrated the moral courage that should define captaincy three years earlier when he served as (to mix metaphors) Jackie Robinson's blocking back during Jackie's rookie season.

Mark D'Antonio: There was a reason Pee Wee Reese wore No. 1 and no one ever will again.

Jay Blaustein: Was there a more important captain — perhaps in history — than Pee Wee Reese?

Dom Infanto: The captain of captains for those who remember is Pee Wee Reese from the Boys of Summer. I know it's a long time, but some of us still remember.

Michael Eisen: Harry Carson was the leader and most powerful locker room voice on the Giants teams that advanced the franchise from abysmal to champions in the 1980s. Harry helped keep L.T. from falling off the deep end. Bill Belichick reveres him. If a disciplinary issue arose, Parcels' solution often was simply saying, "Harry, fix it."

Bill Field: Harry Carson may not have had the "C," but he was the players captain. A true distinction in my book.

Bob Alazio: The leader on the field and in the locker room for those Giants was captain Harry Carson.



Mike Vaccaro

mvaccaro@nypost.com

OPEN MIKE

LOSING THE PLOT

No 100-loss MLB team would be rare occurrence

I MUST admit, I've been a little obsessed with this subject ever since I saw one of my favorite trivia questions in quite a while the other day.

Here it is:

Q: What is the only major league franchise that has never lost 100 games in a season?

Now, before we give you the answer, I will remove some of the obvious potential answers to this one for you.

The Yankees, for instance, have done more winning than any team in baseball history. And though it's been a while, they have gotten there: 103 losses in 1908, 102 in 1912 (the last year they were known as the Highlanders).

It's not the Cardinals, who've won more World Series than anyone else in the National League, and always seem to be anywhere from good to very good to great. The Cards have lost 100 twice in the post-1900 (aka "modern") era: back to back in 1907 (101 losses) and 1908 (105). It's not the Dodgers, who lost 104 in 1905, when they were called the Superbas.

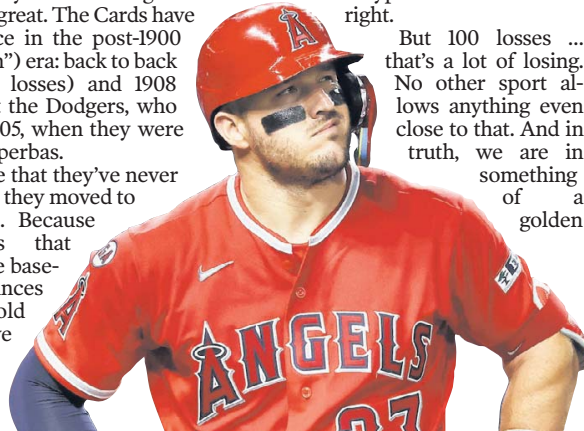
It is notable that they've never lost 100 since they moved to Los Angeles. Because that means that among all the baseball grievances we can hold against LA, we can add another. Because the answer to the trivia question is this: the Los Angeles/California/Anaheim/Los Angeles Angels.

Since inception in 1961, the Angels have dabbled with it — hitting 99 losses two years ago — but have never quite gotten there. That's notable because as of Saturday morning, the Angels' record stood at 45-71. That's a .388 winning percentage. That projects to 99 losses.

Right on the precipice. But not quite there.

One hundred losses has been the gold standard — or is that the zinc standard? — of losing in American sports. Nobody blinks when an NBA team loses 50. There have been a few winless NFL teams, but that's more about the number on the left side of the hyphen — 0 — than the right.

But 100 losses ... that's a lot of losing. No other sport allows anything even close to that. And in truth, we are in something of a golden



NUMBERS GAME: If Mike Trout and the Angels, along with a few other teams, can avoid reaching 100 losses this season, it would be the first time since 2017 no MLB team hit that threshold.

Getty Images

age for bad baseball seasons. The past two years, the Rockies have 119 and the White Sox 121. Since 2021 alone there have been 17 — 17! — teams that have lost at least 100.

The Athletics are the masters of the craft. They have lost 100 or more games 18 times since 1901 (11 times in Philadelphia, four in Kansas City, three in Oakland). And it is worth noting that, as of Saturday, they have the same 45-71 record as the Angels — and are very much trending in the wrong direction. They have a wonderful chance to add Sacramento and make it four cities with 100 losses under one peripatetic franchise's umbrella.

Until their recent winning streak, it sure seemed like the Mets might be on a fast track to 100 losses. The Mets lost 100 in five of their first six seasons, 1962-67, but since that 61-101 record in 1967, they've only reached 100 losses once — 59-103 in 1993.

If anything, that proves that it's actually quite challenging to lose that many games. Think of how awful the Mets were in the Grant's Tomb Era of 1977-83. The Mets lost 90-plus in all six 162-game seasons in that stretch and never got to 100. The Art Howe Mets? Never hit 100.

Entering Saturday, their record was 51-66. That's bad, by any definition. But it also only projects to 70-92 across 162. In fact, even if the Angels and A's (and Rockies) sit right on the cliff's edge, right now no team projects to 100 losses this year. If that happens, it'll be the first time there's been no 100-lossers since 2017.

Of course ... there's still a lot of season left.

VAC'S WHACKS

SOMEONE on the Mets might want to do **Jeffrey Yan** a solid and show him that famous video of what old **Lenny Randle** did to that poor pitcher he was mad at with a drag bunt. Just for his own safety.

➤ Following the Padres-Mets afternoon game at Citi Field on Aug. 19, the FDNY and NYPD will square off in a "Battle of the Badges" game. **David Wright**, son of a police officer, will host the game for the third straight season.

"It's one of my favorite days of the year," said Wright. "It's a way to say thank you to people who run into trouble and not away from it. I am proud to be part of the day."

➤ Godspeed to **Cozell McQueen**, part of **Jimmy V's** N.C. State miracle team from '83, who climbed the basket that night in Albuquerque after his teammate **Lorenzo Charles** slammed home the winner and, in a lot of our mind's eye, has stayed there ever since.

➤ Kudos to **YES' Ryan Ruocco**, who capped **George Lombard Jr.'s** debut with a three-word summary that could've easily carried the day on the back page too: "Summer of George!"

Kenneth Meltsner: How long before Jeffrey Yan pulls an Edwin Díaz?
Vac: Honestly, forgetting all the hand-wringing about his post-strikeout antics, that's exactly what I thought of first. What happens the first time he doesn't quite stick the landing?
Robert Nelson: It does seem like

WHACK BACK AT VAC

the owners and players are cruising along in their cushy limos, intent on replaying the end of "Thelma & Louise," and it looks like common sense (sadly, an uncommon virtue) will not prevail.

Vac: Anyone willing to trump my "Planet of the Apes" reference with a "Thelma & Louise" one gets E-ZPassed right to the WhackBacks.
@gfreigh72: Volpe is par for the

course. Bring prospect up, change his swing 10 times, get poor results, discard prospect. Rinse and repeat. Volpe/Sánchez/Andujar/Frazier/Wells. A new direction is needed but I don't think Hal Steinbrenner

has it in him to do it.
@MikeVacc: And the griddle becomes ever toastier ...
John F. Balestriere: Well, at least this Tarik Skubal trade all but confirms that I'll have 2.5 years to save up for the next MLB Opening Day in 2029!
Vac: My readers are nothing if not eternal optimists!

EVERY SUNDAY MIKE VACCARO RESPONDS TO READERS' QUESTIONS AT MVACCARO@NYPOST.COM AND @MIKEVACC ON X



RED SOX REVIVAL: Boston players celebrate completing a four-game sweep of the Yankees on June 28. The series kickstarted a surge that has seen the Bosox go from the AL's worst to firmly in the wild-card hunt.

CURSES!

HOW CLOSE to down 0-3 in a seven-game series is an AL-worst 32-46 record through 78 games with the majors' fewest runs, an interim manager, and the most vociferous fan base in the sport in hate with your roster, head of baseball operations and owner?

That is the Red Sox squad the Yankees were set to face in a four-game series at Fenway Park beginning June 25. Had the Yankees won even a single game, much less split, would they have left Boston in the 2026 scrapheap heading toward being trade deadline sellers?

Instead, in a 2004 ALCS redux, the Red Sox won four straight to defibrillate their season. That launched them toward a 32-5 stretch through Friday — the best 37-game span in a team history dating to 1901.

Blowing that three-games-to-zero lead was arguably the worst period in Yankees history and certainly is within The Rivalry. The best was surging from 14 games down on July 19, 1978, to win the AL East in the one-game, Bucky "Bleeping" Dent playoff at Fenway.

Well, the 2026 Red Sox might even all scores. When that June 25 series began, they were 15½ games behind the AL-best Yankees. They went into Saturday a half-game back of the Yankees for the top wild card and five behind the Rays for the best record in the AL East and league.

Boston is no longer calling daily for owner John Henry to sell, but fire head of baseball operations Craig Breslow first. Now, Fenway adores a team that relentlessly fights nine innings (or

Yankees' struggles fed into Bosox surge

more) with myriad heroes.

The Yankees were 17-20 since that sweep before Saturday, having scored the majors' second-fewest runs. Aaron Judge should probably win the AL MVP again considering how much his absence has further exposed how much the Yankees rely upon him.

But there are no injury excuses in this flip-flop.

When this season began Roman Anthony, third for AL Rookie of the Year in 2025, was arguably the Red Sox's best position player and Garrett Crochet, coming off second for the AL Cy Young, their best

pitcher. Anthony hit .229 with one homer through 30 games before going on the IL with a sprained wrist. He last played May 4. Crochet had a 6.30 ERA in six starts before going on the IL with shoulder inflammation. He last pitched April 25.

The Yankees could say homegrown products they expected so much from such as Jasson Domínguez, Anthony Volpe and Austin Wells regressed (or worse).

Except Boston not long ago thought it was building its positional core around Anthony, Kristian Campbell and Marcelo Mayer. Anthony signed an eight-year, \$130 million extension last August. Campbell signed an eight-year, \$60 million pact in spring training 2025 before playing an MLB game, had a minus-0.9 WAR (Baseball Reference) last year in 67 games and has not returned as he has performed meh at Triple-A. Mayer, the

fourth pick in the 2021 draft, managed a 75 OPS-plus in 114 Red Sox games before being traded to the Giants at this deadline mainly for lefty reliever Erik Miller.

The best answer just might be that it is a long season, and going into that June 25 series at Fenway Park, Brian Cashman's "Run It Back" group was performing generally well while Breslow was sitting on what appeared to be the worst trade from the offseason.

But over the past six-plus weeks, the resigned trio of Paul Goldschmidt, Trent Grisham and Amed Rosario, in particular, have been atrocious offensively as the non-Judge lineups have desperately needed wide contributions. Plus, Grisham and Rosario have really hurt the Yankees defensively as well.

For most of the first half, the offseason trade of Shane Bieber, David Hamilton and Kyle Harrison from Boston to Milwaukee for Caleb Durbin, Andruw Monasterio and Anthony Seigler was ridiculously one-sided. Harrison notably emerged as a top-of-the-rotation piece. And the Brewers would not reverse the trade even now.

But Seigler, a minor league washout as mainly a catcher with the Yankees after being their first-round pick in 2018, has provided energy and big hits as a Red Sox second baseman since being called up for good in late June. After injuries to Trevor Story, Isiah Kiner-Falefa and Mayer (before his trade), Monasterio has patched shortstop while also delivering big hits.

However, it is Durbin who has most been Boston's bellwether. Through May 24,

among 170 qualifiers, Durbin's .479 OPS was the worst to go with a minus-0.5 Fangraphs WAR. Since then, he had a .899 OPS and his 2.6 WAR was eighth-best in the majors. Durbin is a mighty mite good at every phase.

He was the key piece the Yankees surrendered after the 2024 season to acquire Devin Williams from Milwaukee. It accentuates how much these Red Sox are being helped by those with Yankees' history.

There's Seigler. Aroldis Chapman and Sonny Gray, who both lessened under the Bronx glare, are having peaks in the Boston cauldron. Among the worst moves of Brian Cashman's tenure, Garrett Whitlock was left unprotected, taken in the 2020 Rule 5 draft, and has since been an elite setup man, including a 1.88 ERA this season in 44 games.

Carlos Narváez, acquired for Elmer Rodríguez, was just used in the package by the Red Sox to outdo the Yankees to land Adley Rutschman from the Orioles.

So, yes, the Yankees — with Judge, Cody Bellinger, Giancarlo Stanton, Carlos Rodón and Clarke Schmidt — are expecting help in the coming weeks. But Rutschman (wrist) was to begin a rehab assignment Saturday to draw closer to a debut for the Red Sox, who targeted a catcher due to a .636 OPS from the position while the Yankees (.569) acquired no one. Plus, Boston hopes Crochet builds up enough to make the Red Sox pen better and that Anthony returns too.

Should all of this make the Yankees feel ... Cursed?

joel.sherman@nypost.com



Joel Sherman
Hardball

BUG' NAKED

Mets' lack of starting pitching, hitting exposed in shutout loss to Pirates

By MIKE PUMA

PITTSBURGH — Robert Stock had a day to remember last Sunday when in his return to a major league mound after thoracic outlet syndrome surgery he gave the Mets five effective innings against Miami.

But on Saturday he resembled the back of his baseball card: a 36-year-old journeyman who has largely scuffled following a solid rookie season as a reliever with the Padres in 2018.

Stock couldn't throw enough strikes against the Pirates, and the ones that did land in the zone were peppered all over the ballpark. With Stock's rough outing went the Mets' four-game winning streak in a 9-0 loss at PNC Park.

"It's one of those things where you look at the process and see what was going on that you can do better over time," Stock said

after surrendering eight runs on nine hits and five walks over three innings. "When I am getting guys 0-2, and even if I am giving up weak contact, you can't give up weak contact if you strike them out.

"And then falling behind in the count later in the game is just inexcusable, because even if you are losing, the manager is looking at you to eat innings, and that was the worst part of tonight: When I got fatigued, I didn't battle through it. I kind of gave into it. That's on me."

Such is life for a club that has struggled to fill a starting rotation this season. Rookie lefty Zac Thornton has mitigated some of that disappointment, but Kodai Senga's banishment to the bullpen hasn't helped.

And in the 30 hours leading into Monday's trade deadline, the Mets traded an underperforming starter (Freddy Peralta) and pitcher on the cusp of returning

from a rehab assignment (Clay Holmes) to the Rays and Cubs, respectively. Those trades — the latter of which also sent Tyrone Taylor to the Cubs — netted the Mets four minor league prospects.

This Stock clunker followed Sunday's start against the Marlins in which he allowed only one run over five innings.

"He has talent," said Mets interim manager Andy Green, who managed Stock with the Padres. "He earned that right for a second start. We'll make a determination where we go from here, but this most surely doesn't define him."

Stock got jumped in the first inning, when he allowed three runs on three hits, a walk and a hit batsman. Ronny Simon's two-run double was the inning's big hit after Jake Mangum and Bryan Reynolds singled in succession leading off. Stock loaded the bases by plunking Spencer Horwitz and allowed an RBI fielder's choice to Nick Gonzales before Simon delivered.

Simon singled and stole second in the third, and Jacob Gonzalez's RBI single buried Stock in a 4-0 hole.

The Pirates knocked out Stock in the fourth by scoring another four runs. Mangum's RBI double extended the Mets' deficit to 5-0 and Stock's wild pitch brought in another run. Gonzalez's two-run double ended Stock's night.

Luis Torrens entered to pitch the seventh with the Mets behind 8-0 and allowed one earned run over two innings.

Offensively, the Mets showed little after blasting 10 homers combined in their previous four games. The lineup was without Carson Benge, who is sidelined with a bone bruise in his left wrist after sliding into the left field fence on Friday. Benge will be evaluated on a daily basis.

"As the game slipped away from us, we didn't have a lot of quality at-bats after that," Green said of a lineup that produced only three hits against Bubba Chandler and the Pirates bullpen.

mpuma@nypost.com

PIRATES 9
METS 0

Boxscore
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ON DECK: at Pirates

Sunday, 1:35 p.m., SNY, WHSQ (880 AM)



LHP Sean Manaea

2026 stats:
3-5, 4.33 ERA

Career vs. PIT:
0-1, 2.81 ERA

Last start:
Tues., at CLE;
6.0 IP, 7 H, 2 ER



RHP Jared Jones

2026 stats:
2-3, 4.02 ERA

Career vs. NYM:
0-0, 0.00 ERA

Last start:
Tues., at MIL;
4.0 IP, 8 H, 3 ER

PITCH BREAKDOWN

37%	31%	21%
4-Seamer	Sweeper	Sinker

PITCH BREAKDOWN

45%	35%	12%
4-Seamer	Slider	Changeup

UP NEXT

MONDAY: at Braves, 7:15 p.m., SNY, WHSQ
RHP Christian Scott vs. RHP Bryce Elder

TUESDAY: at Braves, 7:15 p.m., SNY, WHSQ
RHP Nolan McLean vs. LHP Martín Pérez

INJURY REPORT

■ **Mark Vientos** has begun hitting from a tee while rehabbing his right hand fracture. Vientos has been on the injured list since July 10.

FRUSTRATION MOUNTS: Francisco Alvarez throws hits bat after popping out in the eighth inning Saturday. Alvarez had one of the Mets' three hits in the loss to the Pirates. Getty Images

More Mets / Page 66



Name that tune

Amazin' social media maven makes waves with music about Mets

MAKE A NOTE: Jordan Simpson has become popular on social media thanks to his music videos about the Mets.

Stephen Yang

By SPENCER BROD

Jordan Simpson was trying to focus on his music rehearsal, but his phone wouldn't stop buzzing.

He said he couldn't play instruments with the noises, and chucked his phone on the ground.

But once he checked his phone, it was a flood of follows, retweets and likes after his video recreating the Mets' SNY theme song went viral on social media.

"I'm like, 'Oh wait,' my video is doing that?" Simpson said. "I'm like, 'Oh shoot, OK, then that's something.' So that was pretty cool."

The video — which featured Simpson, 27, drumming and playing instruments to SNY's years-long pregame theme song — aired on the network before the Mets' 2023 season opener. But it more importantly established Simpson as a prominent baseball content creator — he's amassed tens of thousands of social media followers by blending his passions for the Mets and music to produce Mets-related songs for fans recapping every series.

"I tend to always conceptually combine baseball and music together," Simpson said. "There are a lot of parallels in different ways, but I think in terms of combining music with the Mets, it kind of just became a thing where I didn't think too deeply about it, but obviously those are my two passions."

Simpson was constantly around music growing up. He began playing drums at just 1 ½ years old before doing nearly every ensemble in middle and high school.

With his sister Devin, Simpson also often attended his father's wedding band rehearsals, where they'd take notes of what sounded right and wrong and offer their opinion on certain performances.

Devin said she and her brother grew up listening to artists like Earth, Wind and Fire, Journey, and Stevie Nicks.

"We had a full library in the Simpson house, and we'd have family jam sessions sometimes," Devin said. "Jordan and I, when



we were kids, we'd reenact the live concerts, DVDs that we had and put on a show for our parents.

Simpson started playing baseball in 2006 and became a Mets fan by turning on the TV and seeing their games on.

He also attended games — notably Johan Santana's no-hitter in 2012, the first in Mets history.

"As much as I wanted to get into the space, the first video that I did wasn't so much with that intention," Simpson said. "It was just more so, I'm a musician who likes the Mets, I'm gonna try this video and just post it and not think much of it, and then that took off."

Now, after every Mets series, Simpson chooses an artist from the city of the team the Mets played against.

When the Mets played the Blue Jays in late June-early July, Simpson performed a Mets-themed song with inspiration from The Weeknd, a Toronto-based singer. When the Mets played the Red Sox July 10-12, Simpson wrote a song inspired by the Boston-based band Bell Biv DeVoe.

Simpson's Subway Series song recaps have

come from artists like Billy Joel and a band called Lawrence, the latter of which he used for a May 2025 recap.

"They're a band from New York, and they're some Mets fans as well," Simpson said of Lawrence. "And through me doing the content, we developed a great friendship. I did one of their songs, and last year I did one of their songs with their lead singer, which is a lot of fun."

Simpson said a decent amount of preparation comes with producing the songs due to the variables that come into play.

Before picking a song, Simpson said he thinks about the length of a series to determine what would be conducive to three or four games, along with how he'd arrange the given song prior to learning it.

The 27-year-old said songs take him a couple hours to produce on the short end but can take up to six or seven hours at most.

Simpson was at the Mets' thrilling Game 4 win over the Phillies in the 2024 NLDS, and didn't prepare anything for a recap song since he didn't want to jinx anything.

After Francisco Lindor's grand slam won

the game, Simpson chose Lindor's walk-up song, "My Girl," as the tune for his recap. Simpson didn't get home until past midnight, but his TikTok still had 6,292 likes and 72,500 views.

"Those are ones where you're riding the high of being at the ballpark when it happens, and then coming home, and I'm like, 'Oh shoot, I have to write a song about this,' and I'm staying up until 4 a.m.," Simpson said.

With Simpson currently attending Liberty University for graduate school, balancing time for schoolwork and recaps is difficult, he says.

"Even if he has to be up until 4 o'clock in the morning to make sure he can post it first thing in the morning," Devin said. "He does whatever it takes. You can be in the car and he's listening to songs to figure out what song he's going to be doing for the next recap."

Though he doesn't think about the recognition often, Simpson said several fans have bumped into him at Mets games.

"There's nothing like the feeling of somebody coming to you and saying, 'I appreciate what you do, and thank you for that,'" Simpson said. "I could be at a concert and somebody says, 'Oh, you're the Mets guy.'"

So, it turns out the rehearsal notifications were something more than just breaking news — it was the start of a career.

Matthew Baluyot, a close friend of Simpson, said miserable sports radio personalities get significant attention, and that Simpson separates himself by creating content with a positive mindset.

Baluyot said even during the Mets' awful season — they sit last in the NL East — Simpson's music gives him a pulse and updates on what's happening with the team.

"I think at his core, Jordan Simpson embodies the 'Ya Gotta Believe' motto in the new age," Baluyot said. "When things are going tough, he's still making this content."

pboyd@nypost.com

Boone teases Stanton progress

By MARK W. SANCHEZ

Giancarlo Stanton is progressing and “doing quite well,” according to manager Aaron Boone, who hinted but did not state that Stanton has reached a significant stage of his rehab.

Stanton, who jogged in the outfield Friday as he builds up following a pair of calf strains, has “started the introduction to some bases,” Boone said Saturday.

YANKS NOTES

Running the bases is often the final hurdle to clear before a rehab assignment (or simply an activation, if Stanton holds form and skips time in the minor leagues). Stanton had been running the bases in June, when he was nearing a return from the original calf strain and suffered another.

Asked to clarify whether Stanton had run the bases, Boone reiterated that he “introed it in a light way [Friday].”

Boone has been consistently vague regarding developments concerning Stanton (and Aaron Judge) and did not want to shed further light on Stanton's status.

► Despite a lefty in **Chris Sale** on the mound for Atlanta and a righty in **Grant Holmes** expected to start Sunday, Boone started **Austin Wells**, who went 1-for-2 with a double, against the southpaw.

“I like him with Gerrit,” Boone said of Wells, who entered having caught Cole 10 times this season, Cole sporting a 2.88 ERA in those games.

In the lone game **Ali Sánchez** caught Cole, Cole allowed five earned runs in 4 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings.

► In his first rehab start with Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, **Carlos Rodón** allowed three runs on three hits and two walks while striking out four in 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ innings. He threw 48 pitches (29 strikes).

ETERNALLY THANKFUL

A Letter from Tommy John:

I want to thank the Yankees organization & the Steinbrenner family for giving me this opportunity to say goodbye to everyone, along with all the friends & fans who followed me throughout my 26-year career.

Thanks to Dr. Jobe, who saved my arm & made it possible for me to continue pitching. That surgery has since gone on to save the careers of countless pitchers, including many of the very best in the game today.

Thank you to all the fans who supported me & my teammates for 26 years. I will never forget you.

The day I left for my first job as a pitcher, my father looked at me & said, “Good luck, Tommy. Just remember one thing: whether you make it big in the big leagues or you don’t, you’ll always just be Tommy John from Terre Haute, Indiana.”

I’ve never forgotten those words. Thank you & God Bless.

Tommy John (TJ)



By DAN MARTIN

Old-Timers’ Day in The Bronx took on an unexpectedly somber tone when Tommy John released a statement through the Yankees in which he said “goodbye to everyone” as he battles health issues and is in hospice care, according to sources.

“I want to thank the Yankees organization [and] the Steinbrenner family for giving me this opportunity to say goodbye to everyone, along with all the friends [and] fans who followed me throughout my 26-year career.”

The former Yankee — best known for being the first to undergo the elbow surgery that now bears his name — was remembered fondly by his former teammates Saturday at the Stadium.

“He had almost 300 wins, on top of everything else he did,” Ron Guidry said. “It was great having him on the team. He was so knowledgeable. When we were together,

we were pretty much 1-2 on the staff and having him around gave me great comfort. He could talk and it was nice to have him around because he would answer any question you had and he did so much in the game.”

John had been an All-Star with the White Sox and was a standout with the Dodgers by the time he injured his UCL in 1974.

At the time, that was seen as a likely career-ending injury, but Dodgers team physician Dr. Frank Jobe performed the procedure on John, then 31, in which the lefty's elbow ligament was replaced.

John missed the entire 1975 season, but returned a year later and pitched 14 seasons with the recon-

structed elbow.

In his statement, John also credited Jobe, who “saved my arm [and] made it possible for me to continue pitching. That surgery has gone on to save the careers of countless pitchers, including many of the very best in the game today.”

Of John's 288 career victories, 164 came after his surgery.

Perhaps fittingly, Saturday's starters — Gerrit Cole and Atlanta's Chris Sale — had undergone the surgery and returned to elite form.

“It’s weird to think about the surgery saving us, but the player had to step up to the table and do it,” Cole said of John after the 5-4 win. “He had tremendous success afterwards. He was really writing the

book for all of us. There’s a lot of gratitude towards him.”

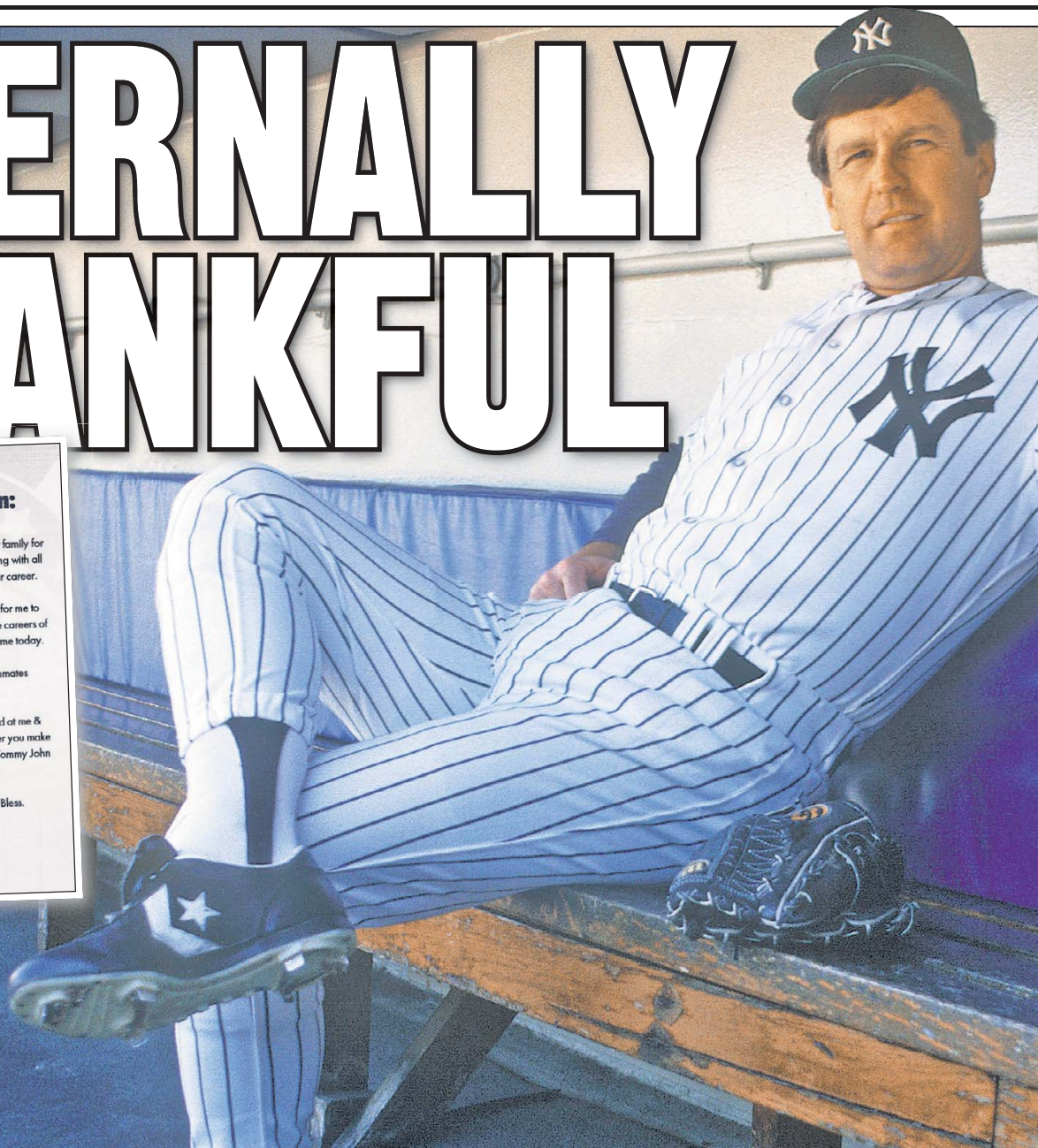
John signed with the Yankees for the first time prior to the 1979 season and was there until he was traded to the Angels midway through the 1982 season.

He won over 20 games in each of his first two years in The Bronx and returned in 1986. He remained with the Yankees through the rest of his major league career, which ended in 1989.

John started 700 games in his career, the eighth most of all time, and his 4,710 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings pitched are 19th on the all-time list.

Rick Cerone played with — and caught — John and called him “a great competitor.”

“He got better with age,” Cerone said.



Tommy John says ‘goodbye’ as pioneer battles health issues

A CUT ABOVE: Tommy John won 288 games as a hurler for six teams, including two stints with the Yankees. More than half the wins came after he was the first to undergo the surgery that now bears his name.

Getty Images

By DAN MARTIN

Mariano Rivera pitched in Saturday's Old-Timers' Day in The Bronx. He was also on the mound the last time the Yankees won a World Series.

"It's been hard," Rivera said of the franchise's World Series drought, which extends back to that 2009 Fall Classic.

The Yankees have been stuck at 27 championships ever since.

"It's unbelievable, but it's the truth," Rivera said. "Hopefully, this year is the year. It's not easy. Winning championships is not easy; it's hard."

Rivera was among the Yankee greats who still can't fathom how long it's been since the franchise won it all in 2009, when Rivera closed out the Phillies in six games.

"They've been close," Jorge Posada said of the Yankees, who lost to the Dodgers in the 2024 World Series.

"They haven't been able to put it all together," Posada said. "It's about being hot at the right moment, especially in October. Every year, it seems they run into a team that plays better, whether it's the Dodgers, Houston [or] Toronto."

Before the Yankees can threaten to end the streak, they must get to the playoffs.

That seemed like a foregone conclusion not too long ago, and they are still in a good spot as they battle the Red Sox for the American League's top wild-card spot.

"Some teams find ways to lose games late," Tino Martinez said. "You can do that in July and August and still make the playoffs. You can't do that in October."

Of course, most of their struggles have come with Aaron Judge sidelined for over two months with a fractured rib.

Until Judge returns, questions will remain.

"They need to get healthy," Posada said.

"Hopefully, the big boy comes back, and everyone does their job," Rivera said of Judge.

Bernie Williams has a better idea than most of what Judge is going through, having dealt with a rib injury late in the 2000 season.

"Judge has to feel good, and it's tricky whenever you have anything with the rib," Williams said. "You can't do anything about it. You have to just let it heal."

In the meantime, they have to find a way to win without him.

"Guys have to take it upon themselves to manufacture runs," Martinez said. "Missing Judge is big, but now's the time to figure out

"That ball kept sinking and sinking."

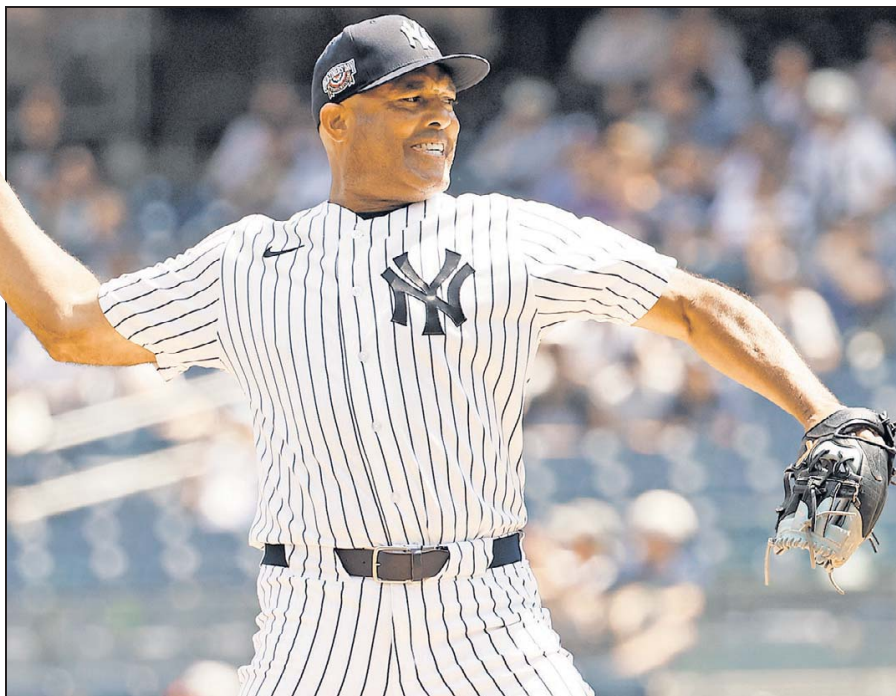
Cerone also recalled John's managing days, as John managed the Staten Island Yankees in 2004, as well as two seasons in the independent Atlantic League with Bridgeport. John also spent time as a broadcaster with the Yankees.

"Tommy was tough to compete against and a terrific teammate," Willie Randolph said. "We were just talking about him today. It's shocking to hear he's struggling and I'm praying for him."

The native of Terre Haute, Ind., also pitched for Cleveland, the Angels and A's and finished second in the National League Cy Young vote in 1977 with the Dodgers, behind Philadelphia's Steve Carlton, and second in the American League vote in 1979 with the Yankees, trailing only Baltimore's Mike Flanagan.

John, in 2024, revealed he had bladder cancer, but it's unclear if that is what he is dealing with now.

dan.martin@nypost.com



IT'S BEEN A WHILE: Legendary Yankees closer Mariano Rivera, who was on the mound for the franchise the last time it won the World Series in 2009, winds up for a pitch during Old-Timers' Day festivities at Yankee Stadium on Saturday.

Jason Szenes

Old-Timers pray title drought near its end

how to do that. In 1998, when we won all those games, we didn't blow people out. We did the little things, too."

They also had excellent pitching, which is why Williams believes this team can end the streak.

"It's been a while since it happened, and I know every year, the mandate of this organization is to go to the World Series," Williams said. "As frustrated as all the fans are that they haven't won it, I know the players are,

too. I think this year they have a good chance because of [Gerrit] Cole and [Max] Fried. Every championship team I've ever known has had that 1-2 punch, plus [Carlos] Rodón will be back. Pitching is going to be an important part of it."

But as anyone who has watched the Yankees in recent weeks knows, without Judge, Cody Bellinger and Giancarlo Stanton, the lineup hasn't been able to score nearly enough runs to win in the playoffs.

Boone backs Caballero after latest clock ding

By DAN MARTIN

Aaron Boone insists José Caballero no longer is pushing the envelope when it comes to the pitch clock, which made the infielder's violation with one out in the bottom of the seventh Saturday even more bothersome to the manager.

"They got him for circumvention," Boone said of the call by home plate umpire Dan Merzel in the 5-4 Yankees win over Atlanta at the Stadium.

Boone added the call was made at "around 11 seconds [with] no warning. And they have to warn him."

Caballero has made a name for himself this season by occasionally not engaging with pitchers

until the 8-second mark on the pitch clock, which is as long as a batter can go.

Last month, Caballero was called for a violation even when he was engaged prior to the 8-second mark because the umpires ruled he spent the final few seconds in the batter's box but looking down.

A visibly frustrated Boone indicated that the interpretation of the rule appeared to change again Saturday — at least in regard to Caballero.

And to make matters worse, even after Caballero worked a walk in the at-bat, he was clearly still upset about the violation and slammed his equipment down before going to first.

He had to be guided to the base

by first base coach Dan Fiorito.

As that was going on, Merzel called a pitch-clock violation on the next batter, Austin Wells.

"That was petty stuff going on," Boone said of Merzel's call in the Wells' at-bat. "I thought that was uncalled for."

Boone argued with Merzel and crew chief Dan Bellino after the inning, noting that Caballero was never given a heads-up before the call.

You have to warn him," Boone said. "You have to warn him — unless I get a new memo from the league that changes [the rule] again."

Boone added Caballero is "not doing that anymore. ... I didn't even see this one. There might have been some circumvention,

[but] there needs to be a warning."

Caballero has been able to bother opposing pitchers with his ability to not engage until the final moment, which led to the benches clearing in a game against the Pirates last month, when Pittsburgh's Dennis Santana took exception to Caballero's manipulation of the pitch timer.

That resulted in a pitch being waved off during the at-bat.

Around the time that the pitch-clock controversy came to a head, Caballero fell into a funk at the plate, going 5-for-29 with a double, two walks and 10 strikeouts in a nine-game stretch.

And his playing time may be limited with George Lombard Jr. now the everyday shortstop.

ROOKIE MONSTERS

By MARK W. SANCHEZ

A Saturday afternoon dedicated to nostalgia for the past might have transitioned into a display of hope for the present and future.

The Old-Timers — including members of the 1996 World Series team celebrating the 30-year anniversary and plenty of representatives from the 2009 champions, the last link to Yankees greatness — put on a show for 45,222 in The Bronx who came to pay tribute to yesterday's heroes.

And a few hours later, a pair of exciting rookies on the 2026 Yankees offered some hope that tomorrow's — and maybe today's — Yankees can reclaim some of that glory.

On Old-Timers' Day, it was George Lombard Jr. and Spencer Jones — who have played a combined 48 major league games — who carried a previously silent Yankees offense in a 5-4 victory over Chris Sale and the Braves.

"I didn't think about that," Jones said about the rookies shining in front of the franchise alumni. "That's pretty sweet. I think those guys lay the foundation of what this organization is."

The Yankees (66-51), who have seen 18 of their past 24 games get decided by one or two runs, will try to sweep a series against the class of the NL East on Sunday after moving 1½ games clear of the Red Sox for the top AL wild-card spot.

They survived another nail-biter in part because Gerrit Cole (seven innings, two runs) continued what



Jones, Lombard help Yanks gobble up win against Sale & Braves

**YANKEES 5
BRAVES 4** **Boxscore
Page 60**

has been a remarkable run for Yankees starting pitchers, who sport a 1.67 ERA (64 ⅔ innings, 12 earned runs) in their past 11 games.

But Cole was dented in the fifth, which meant he needed some support. He found it mostly through a pair of rookies who are untested but have undeniable ability.

Jones and Lombard finished a combined 4-for-6 with two walks, a homer, a triple, three runs scored and three RBIs. The rest of the lineup went 4-for-24.

The game was ultimately decided in the fifth, in which the Braves tagged Cole for two runs in the top half of the inning to take a 2-1 edge before the Yankees provided an immediate answer.

Lombard — who seemingly does everything well — appeared to strike out on two consecutive pitches to lead off the frame, but in both instances he used challenges to earn balls three

and four of the plate appearance.

After the walk, up stepped Jones, who against Sale — a big lefty famously dominant against same-sided hitters — cranked an RBI triple that split the outfielders in right-center to tie the game.

"Excellent, really excellent," manager Aaron Boone said of Jones, who had snapped an 0-for-19 skid with a first-inning RBI single against Sale. "He's shown here over the last 10 days, I feel like he's gaining experience and you can see it up there — you can see some adjustments he makes."

A Yankees team that has scored more than five runs just four times in its past 45 games needs to score any way it can, and so it will not apologize for the go-ahead run then coming on a balk from Sale, who was irate but less outraged than his manager, Walt Weiss, who was ejected from the game.

The next Yankees runs came more traditionally: Lombard visited the short porch in the seventh inning

for his second career home run and Ben Rice added one of his own in the eighth, both solo shots mattering because Brent Headrick (who let up a dinger to Ronald Acuña Jr. in the eighth) and David Bednar (one run on a hit and a walk in the ninth) were not perfect.

For too long, just about perfection has been required from the Yankees staff, so inept have been the bats. Jones, cartoonishly talented but with extreme swing-and-miss weaknesses in the minors, showed enough to replace Jasson Domínguez on the roster. Lombard, just 21, is asserting on a daily basis that his glove is not just ready but elite and his bat seems to be improving.

"We were confident that he's ready for this," Boone said of Lombard, who is just the fifth Yankee in the past 46 years to record a hit in each of his first four games. "He's certainly shown that here through his first ... [four] games."

msanchez@nypost.com



KIDS ROCK: Spencer Jones rips a game-tying triple before scoring the go-ahead run on a balk. George Lombard Jr. (inset) later added an insurance run with his second homer in four games.

Jason Szenes (2)

Montefiore Einstein

Official Hospital of the New York Yankees

Young shortstop plays like an old soul

ALL THE AGE: George Lombard Jr., all of 21 years old, approaches the game like an old-timer. On Saturday, his at-bats helped fuel the Yankees victory.

Robert Sabo

IT IS just four games. Keep saying it over and over again. Don't make too much out of so little.

Except every ground ball to and every at-bat by George Lombard Jr. is screaming about precociousness, ability, focus.

The youngest player on the field on Old-Timers' Day fit in. And that was about more than just Aug. 8, 2026. Lombard's traits would connect with those old-time Yankees — the ease, maturity and on-field intellect with which he plays.

This is what I would be comfortable stating about Lombard after four games: He is a baseball player. He does not look out of place; he looks like a major leaguer. So far, an outstanding one. The game at the highest level is not too fast for him, and on defense he can make 104.8 mph to the backhand off Drake Baldwin's bat look slow, as he did to open Saturday's game — "Played it like he was half asleep," in Ger-rit Cole's words.

That was supposed to be his carrying tool: his glove. And it sure looks special; no play beyond his range or powerful, precise arm. The glove, baserunning and intangibles were expected to translate instantly from Triple-A to the majors. But at each level he had started slowly with his bat

before repetition and familiarity allowed him to catch up and catch on.

Again

, it is four games, but Lombard just has not had a bad at-bat. And a case can be made that the 21-year-old took the Yankees' best plate appearances Saturday, even with one of them ending in a strikeout. This comes at a time when the offensively starved Yankees are craving better plate appearances.

"We were confident that he was ready for this, and he's certainly shown that here through this first week," Aaron Boone said.

The Yankees have won three of the four games Lombard has played. The scores in the victories are 2-0, 3-2 in 10 innings and 5-4 over Atlanta on Saturday. So not a lot of margin for error — and Lombard has swung games winnable either way by being so good on both sides of the ball. By making no errors.

These were his four plate appearances Saturday:

● Second inning, following a one-out Trent Grisham double, Lombard battled from 0-2 down against the Braves ace Chris Sale to a full count, fouling off three two-strike pitches in a nine-pitch at-bat before striking out. On the next pitch, Spencer Jones singled home Grisham for a 1-0 lead.

● After Atlanta took a 2-1 lead against Ger-rit Cole in the top of the fifth, Lombard led off the bottom half and fell behind 1-2 against one of the great put-away starters of his generation. He fouled off two two-strike pitches from Sale. He was called out looking on the next two pitches, challenged them both and ended up with a walk. "That was as big as anything in the game," Boone said of the successful challenges. Jones was then down 1-2 in the count, fouled a ball off, had the ump rule he was hit by a pitch only to have that overturned on replay, worked the count full, then smashed a triple at 111.1 mph to the right-center-field gap to give the Yankees the lead for good.



Joel Sherman



● Leading off the seventh inning, Lombard again reached two strikes (2-2), this time in a right-on-right matchup against Victor Mederos and then went to the opposite field for his second homer in four games.

● Lastly, he singled in the eighth inning to bring his average to .385 and his OPS to 1.346, and the results are honoring disciplined, long at-bats in which Lombard has struck the ball well.

"I always try to be the only one controlling my game plan and my approach," Lombard said.

Lombard arrived to join a team reeling notably because over the past seven weeks, it could not produce batting average or consistent runs. Cody Bellinger, Aaron Judge and Giancarlo Stanton are nowhere near returning — that Clay Bellinger played Saturday at Yankee Stadium (in the Old-Timers' Game) and his son did not is symbolic of this moment.

On Friday night, Boone pinch hit late for Grisham, which he has done rarely this year, and Jazz Chisholm Jr., which he had not previously done. But Grisham and Chisholm, veterans the Yanks were looking to be weight lifters during the injuries to others, have been conspirators in the offensive malaise. The maneuvers by Boone played like a message that pedigree was no longer going to matter. The best players are going to play.

On Saturday, that was Jones, who had two left-on-left RBI hits against the southpaw genius of Sale and a left-on-left walk against Danny Young. And it was Lombard. The duo brings athleticism and pep at a time when the Yanks had extended the dog days too long.

Again, for Lombard, it is just four games. The league will adjust and Lombard will have to adapt in a way, say, his predecessor Anthony Volpe never fully could. But on Old-Timers' Day, the youngest Yankee again looked like someone from central casting — someone poised and polished who could comfortably wear pinstripes at any time.

joel.sherman@nypost.com

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INJURY REPORT

■ **Carlos Rodón** (elbow inflammation) began a rehab assignment Saturday with Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, allowing three runs on three hits and two walks while striking out four in 2 ²/₃ innings.

■ **Giancarlo Stanton** (calf strain) jogged in the outfield prior to Friday's game and is moving closer to running the bases, Aaron Boone said.



vs. Braves

Sunday, 1:35 p.m., TV, WFAN (660 AM, 101.9 FM)

RHP Cam Schiltler



2026 stats:
10-6, 2.26 ERA

Career vs. ATL:
First appearance

Last start:
Monday vs. STL;
3.0 IP, 4 H, 4 ER

PITCH BREAKDOWN

44% 4-Seamer **26%** Cutter **20%** Sinker

RHP Grant Holmes



2026 stats:
7-4, 3.67 ERA

Career vs. NYY:
0-1, 3.86 ERA

Last start:
Tuesday vs. MIA;
6.0 IP, 5 H, 0 ER

PITCH BREAKDOWN

36% Slider **30%** 4-Seamer **12%** Sinker

UP NEXT

TUESDAY: vs. Mariners,
7:05 p.m., YES, WFAN
TBD vs. TBD

WEDNESDAY: vs. Mariners,
7:05 p.m., ESPN, WFAN
TBD vs. TBD

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A WHILE** **AMAZIN' STREAK ENDS
IN SHUTOUT**
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SUNDAY

NEW YORK POST

Sport

AUGUST 9, 2026

**Yankee legend
Tommy John
pens farewell
from hospice**

'Goodbye'

Tommy John, who had two stints with the Yankees and for whom the elbow surgery is named, is in poor health. On Old-Timers' Day, the former hurler wrote: "I want to thank the Yankees organization & the Steinbrenner family for giving me this opportunity to say goodbye to everyone." **P. 80-81**

**YOUNG
TIMERS' DAY**
LOMBARD & JONES POWER YANKS / P. 82-83

Getty Images

Two legendary New York institutions.
One team.

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